

A
SHORT VIEW
OF THE
History of England,
FROM THE
Earliest Accounts of Time.
Including likewise the History,
OF THE
Parliaments of England.

VIZ.

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|--|--|
| I. Their Origin. | V. In what manner called. |
| II. When first Established. | VI. What Business Transacted in it. |
| III. Their Authority of whom composed. | VII. The Power and Privileges of the Two Houses. |
| IV. By whom called. | |

Translated from the FRENCH of the
ABBE RAYNAL.

L O N D O N:

Printed for JONAH WARCUS, at the *Indian Queen*, in the *Poultry*; and HENRY SERJEANT, at the *Star* without *Temple-Bar*. M.DCC.LVII.



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King *William's* Ghost, 1711.

Europe a Slave; when the *Empire* is in Chains, 1713.

The *Beggars* Petition against *Popery*, to King *Henry the Eighth*, in 1538.

The Arguments herein used, greatly prevailed with that King, to throw off the Pope's Authority.

John Bale's Chronicle of the Examination and Death of Sir *John Oldcastle*, Lord *Cobham*.

Poor *Prat's* Letter to *Gilbert Potter*, in Prison, before he had his Ears cut off, for maintaining the Right of the Lady *Mary* to the Crown, against the Succession of Lady *Jane*, advanced thereto by her Father the Duke of *Northumberland*, 1553.

The Execution of Justice in *England* for Peace, and not for Religion, as the Enemies of the Realm, and the Abettors of their Treasons falsely report, &c. 1583.

This Pamphlet was written by the famous Lord *Burghley*.

A Declaration of the Sicknefs, last Words, and Death of *Philip II.* King of *Spain*, 1599.

King *James* his Encouragement for the planting of Mulberry Trees, and the breeding of Silk-Worms; With Instructions for the same, 1609.

Tom

Tom Tell-Troth: Or a free Discourse touching the Manners of the Times: Directed to King *James I.*

Dr *Tho. Venner's* Baths of *Bath*, with a Censure of the Waters of *St Vincent's* Rock near *Bristol*, growing in great Request against the Stone, 1628.

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The lamentable Thunder and Lightning in *Norfolk*, &c. 1656.

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The Love Letters of King *Henry VIII.* to *Anne Boleyn*, in 1528.

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The Life and Execution of Dr *John Story*, a cruel Persecutor of the Protestants, 1571.

Francis Treckmorton's Treasons, 1584.

The Murder of *William* Prince of *Orange*, 1584.

Tho. Churcharde's Spark of Friendship and Good-Will, dedicated to Sir *Walter Raleigh*: With a Commendation of the Paper Mill set up at *Dartford*, by Mr *Spilman* the Queen's Jeweller, 1588.

Earl *Gowrie's* Conspiracy against King *James*, 1600.

Charles

Charles Earl of Nottingham's Embassy to Spain, to take King Philip's Oath upon the Treaty of Peace: By Robert Treswell, Somerset Herald, 1605.

Discourse of the Monstrous Serpent near Horsham, Suffex, 1614.

Some good Tracts to encourage the British Fishery.

Sir Lewis Stukley's Petition and Information, touching the Censure of his Behaviour in bringing up Sir Walter Raleigh, 1618. For which he had Five Hundred Pounds; and being soon after catch'd clipping of it in the King's Palace at Whitehall, was forc'd to part with all he had, to purchase a pardon, and died mad in the Isle of Launday, in less than two Years after.

King James his Declaration of the Demëanor and Carriage of Sir Walter Raleigh, as well in his Voyage, as since his Return: Offer'd as the true Inducements to put him to Death, 1618.

To this is added, The Declaration of one Mansoury, a French Quack, who was employ'd and brib'd by Stukley, to perjure himself, and belie Sir Walter, according to his own Confession, when he was also taken at Plymouth, for clipping some of that fatal Gold above, as may one Day appear; in some original and authentic Letters, at that Time written, and never yet publish'd.

A brief and useful Chronicle of the Kings of Scotland, from Fergus to King James the VI, 1623.

A Discourse of Nicholas Machiavel, 1641.

This is thought to have been written by Mr Francis Osborne.

The Arraignment of Sir Edward Moseley, for a Rape on Anne Swinnerton, 1647.

John Warr's Corruption and Deficiency of the Laws of England, 1649.

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This was written by Dr Walter Pope the Physician.

Nich. Philpot's Reasons and Proposals for a Registry of Deeds and Incumbrances.

Description of the Isle of Sark, 1673.

The Strange Confession of John Perry, of the Murther of his Master Mr W. Harrison, Steward to the Lacy Campden at Campden in Com. Gloucester, by his Mother, Brother and himself;

self; with the Execution of them all, and their Declaration of their dying innocent; and lastly of Mr *Harrison's* returning from Slavery in *Turkey*, after he had been gone near two Years; with his *Letter* thereof to Sir *Tho. Overbury*, the Justice, who committed the supposed Murderers, and was Author of that Narrative, 1676.

Richard Dudgale's Narrative of Count *Gondemar's* wicked Plots, to advance the Popish Religion and *Spanish* Faction, 1679.

Articles of High Treason against the *Duchess of Portsmouth*, 1680.

Sir *Tho. Morgan's* Progress in *France* and *Flanders*, with 6000 *English*, in 1657. 1699.

F. Burges's Observations on the Origin, and first Use of Printing, particularly at *Norwich*, 1701.

This was the first Piece printed there.

Lampoon on the Earl of *Oxford*, Lord *Bolingbroke*, *Arthur Moore*, and *Mat. Prior*, in Relation to the *Peace*, from a MS.

The lamentable Expedition of the Emperor *Charles V*, against the Turks at *Algier*, (in which thirty of his Ships perished by the Storms, all his Horses were eaten by his own Soldiers for want of Provision, and a great Part of these, who were above Thirty-Six Thousand, slain by the Enemy), 1542.

The *Examinations* of *Henry Barrow*, *John Greenwood* and *John Penry*, penn'd by the Prisoners themselves before their Death, 1586.

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This was written by Fryer *Texera*, to make the World believe that King was not slain by *Moors*, at the Battle of *Alcazar*, and probably to countenance the Claim of a *Calabrian* Pretender.

The *Trades Increase*, By J. R. 1615.

In this the Author persuasively recommends the zealous pursuit of the *British Fishery*; shews how the *Hollanders* rob us of a *Million* a Year, and what advantage we might make of the *Newcastle Trade*. See Sir *Walter Raleigh's* Commendation of this Tract, in his *Invention and Improvement of Shipping*.

The Countess of *Lincoln's* Nursery, 1622.

Mr *Alexander Cook's* Assertion of the Being of such a Person in the

the See of *Rome* as *Pope Joan*, from the most ancient and credible Authorities, 1625.

The great and famous *Battle of Lutzen*, in which *Gustavus Adolphus*, the renowned King of *Sweden*, was slain; with an Abstract of his Life, and Account of the King of *Bohemia's* Death, 1633.

Sir Charles Cornwallis's Life of Prince *Henry*, 1641.

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The Life of *Sir Tho. Bodley*, By himself, 1647.

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The Murder of Mr *John Fuffell*, Attorney, by his Brother-in-Law, Major *Geo. Strangeways*, upon some Suits in Law between them; with a particular Account, upon his refusing to plead at the *Old-Baily*, of his Sentence, and Execution; being pressed to Death in the Dungeon at *Newgate*, 1659.

William Cole's Rod for the *Lawyers*, &c. 1659

The Marquess of *Worcester's* Century of the Names and Scantlings of many Admirable Inventions and artificial Improvements, 1663.

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This was written by his Son, *Carew Raleigh*, Esq;

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he was lawfully married to her, and that Their Son the Duke of Monmouth, was the true Heir to the Crown, 1682.

Mrs. Elizabeth Cellier's Popish Scheme for a Royal Hospital of Foundlings, proposed to King James II, in 1687, from her own MS.

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The Great Bastard, Protector of the Little one, 1689.

N. B. 5000 Louis D'ors were offer'd by Proclamation in France, to discover the Author of this Tract.

Chancellor Jeffrey's Repentance and Confession in the Tower, 1689.

Admiral Russel's Letter to the Earl of Nottingham, on his Victory over the French, 1692.

Reasons for a Law to enact the Castration of Popish Ecclesiastics, to prevent the Growth of Popery, 1700.

Queen CATHERINE's Lamentation, or Complaint of a Sinner, bewailing the Ignorance of her blind Life, led in Superstition, &c. 1548.

This was first published in 8vo that Year, by William Cecil, afterwards the famous Lord Burghley.

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Robert Earl of Essex his Ghost, 1624.

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J. Becher's Exact Account how Wenceslaus Seilerus came by, and made Gold with, the Powder of Projection, before the Emperor at Vienna; and many others, publish'd for the Satisfaction of Mr Boyle, &c. 1680.

A perfect Account of the Earl of Argyle's landing in the North of Scotland, 1685.

The last Will of George Fox, the Quakers Apostle: printed from the Original written by himself; so illiterately, as may serve to prove, he was not the Author of any one Page in all those Books which the Quakers have publish'd in his Name, 1688.

James Bovey's Vindication of Nic. Machiavel; from the original MS. 1693.

Dr Alexander Pitcairn's Method of curing the Small Pox, 1704.

The Wonder of Wonders at Windmill Hill: Or the Invitation of John Lacy, Esq; and the rest of the Prophets, to all Spectators to come on the 25th of May next, and behold Dr Eames rise out of his Grave, &c. 1708.

Mr

Mr Lacy's Reasons why the Doctor did not rise from the dead, 1708.

An Historical Poem of the brave Acts of Nennius, an ancient noble Briton, who fought with Julius Cæsar, and after he was wounded to Death by him, got his Sword, and slew a Roman Tribune with it, named Labienus, while his Countrymen won the Battle: Written about Queen Elizabeth's Time, and printed from a MS.

The Reasons which mov'd Queen Elizabeth to proceed in the Reformation of her base and coarse Monies, &c. 1560.

A Letter from a Student in the Laws, to his Friend, concerning the Treasons of Dr Story; with Extracts from his Confession. 1571.

Richard Johnson's Nine Worthies of London, &c. (named Sir W. Walworth, Sir H. Pitchard, Sir W. Sevenoake, Sir T. White, Sir J. Bonham, Sir Christopher Croker, Sir J. Hawkwood, Sir Hugh Calverley, and Sir H. Maleverer, whose Virtues and Valour are here celebrated in prose and Verse), 1592.

Sir Thomas Overbury's Observations in his Travels, upon the State of the Seventeen Provinces, in 1609.

Sir Charles Cornwallis's Negotiation of the two Spanish Matches proposed to the Prince of Wales: Written to the Lord Digby. Printed from a MS.

Robert Green's Theeves falling out, True-Men come by their Goods: Shewing more especially, that the Vices of lewd Women surpass, by many degrees, those of men. From the Edition, 1637.

Dr Francis Godwin Bishop of Landaff, his Account of the admirable Journey of Domingo Gonzales, the little Spaniard, to the World in the Moon, by the Support of several Ganzas, or large Geese. First printed in 1638.

Sir Henry Wotton's Life of the Duke of Buckingham, 1642.

Mock Majesty: Or the Siege of Munster; being the History of John of Leyden's Insurrection with his Anabaptists, their Overthrow, &c. 1644.

The Orders of Parliament, for demonishing all Organs, Images, and superstitious Monuments, in Cathedral, or Parish Churches, and Chapels, throughout England and Wales, 1644.

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245	18	who were	who was

THE
HISTORY
OF THE
Parliament of England.

ENGLAND, now so celebrated, is the last country of Europe that began to make a figure. It was known at first by the name of Albion, and afterwards by that of Britain. Conjecture hath not ventured to hazard any thing on the first, and spent itself to no purpose on the second. We are equally ignorant of the origin of its Founders, and of its first Conquerors. History hath only preserved to us, of the one the names, and of the others a custom equally unknown to civilized Nations and Barbarians: the Britons, like other men, married wives; but in taking them to
B themselves,

themselves, they did not take them from the multitude. That spirit of property, which hath suited the humour of so many other nations, was looked on by them as a dangerous larceny. Some Roman dames reproaching a British lady of distinction with this custom, as equally injurious to both sexes, *We do openly*, replied the fair Briton, *with the worthy men among us, what you act in secret with the vilest of men.*

Whatever may be in this, the Britons, unable to acquire reputation by their exploits, obtained it by their defeat. The noise which their empire made in its fall, was more attended to, than the abilities which had founded it: for their misfortune, and their honour, their interests began to be intermixed with those of the conquerors of the world.

The inhabitants of Great Britain, and of Gaul, have not been always irreconcilable. The succours which the former sent the latter against the Romans, determined the first Captain, and the greatest Writer of ancient Rome to go over to their island. Cæsar's enterprise rather increased the glory of his country, than extended its dominion. The honour of subjecting them was to add
lustre



Parliament of England. 3

lustre to more than one Captain ; and the possession of that fine State was the last conquest of the Republic.

Her yoke, though oppressive, was not broke ; it fell off, as it were, of itself. What the courage and despair of the Britons could not, chance alone effected about four centuries after. Rome, who had so long filled the universe with terror, was reduced to tremble herself. The necessity of repelling the Barbarians that threatened her, determined her to abandon the most distant of her provinces ; and Great Britain recovered its liberty, only because the Romans did not chuse to rule it any longer.

The Britons justified, by their conduct, the contempt of those who despised them. They appeared more embarrassed with their liberty, than they had been with their slavery. The vices of a debauched conqueror had infected their manners ; his virtues had only glanced on their minds. They inherited every thing of the Romans, excepting their valour, their firmness, and their greatness of soul.

This mean disposition was not long unknown to the northern part of the island,

now called Scotland. The Picts and Caledonians, who lived in that frightful climate, seized the opportunity to procure a more agreeable residence than their mountains. A fierce people, whom the Roman Eagle had often beat, but never subjected, found little resistance from slaves. The southern provinces were the prey, and undoubtedly would have become the inheritance of those Barbarians, if they had had no other defenders but their inhabitants.

The Britons wanted to preserve their country, repair their losses, and revenge themselves. They thought they had done enough, in forming such a fine project; the glory of its execution was intrusted to more valiant, more able, and more successful hands. Two Nations, known under the name of Anglo-Saxons, and inseparably connected by interest, had made themselves famous in Germany by their Victories, and in Britain by their Descents. The Britons cowardly implored a Valour which they had often dreaded; and the Saxons listened with pleasure to supplications that favoured the design of a settlement which they had formed. Hengist, who

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who wanted only another theatre or another age, to be ranked with the first of Heroes, commanded the Saxon auxiliaries. He succeeded in both parts of his commission: the enemies were defeated by his bravery, and the allies seduced by his address. With that impetuous courage which nothing can resist, he had an air of frankness which prevented all distrust. While he was forging chains for the Britons, he persuaded them that their glory and safety lay nearest his heart. By dint of services, caresses, and civilities, he brought them insensibly to his purpose; they invited over more Saxons.

This conduct is a strong proof of the ascendancy which great geniuses have over weak minds, policy over simplicity, knowledge over ignorance. The Britons, blinded by an artful man, did not even think him capable of laying a snare for them: dazzled by the advantages of the step which he proposed to them to take, they did not see the inconveniencies of it. They never suspected that their protectors were going to become their tyrants: the event undeceived them too late. They found that their ruin would be effected by those who

had armed for their deliverance. In effect, the Saxons, strengthened by reinforcements, set their assistance at too high a price; the Britons, filled with indignation, depreciated these services too much. Pretensions so opposite rankled the minds of both nations, and gave rise to a long and bloody war, the events of which were not doubtful.

The Saxons were brave, hardy, and led by able Captains; the Britons had neither leaders, valour, nor experience: among the first reigned that strict union which insures the greatest success; the second, ever a prey to their intestine divisions, turned against one another the little strength they had remaining. One party received continual reinforcements, which did more than repair its losses; the other saw citizens daily leaving their Country, which was weakened by their absence; the Foreigners did not conceive there was any resource for them but in Victory, and they fixed her on their side; the Natives unhappily saw a resource in submission; and submitted. Seven Saxon kingdoms were formed on the ruins of the conquered country. Britain lost all even to its Name, which was changed to that of England.

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England. Ambition had projected this conquest, Address prepared the way for it, Valour began it, Perfidy continued it, Cruelty completed it, Precaution insured it. As the English deduce the origin of their Parliament from the government which was then established in their island, we must endeavour to throw light on what has hitherto been pretty much clouded in history.

The Romans, who had subjected the world by their bravery, lost the empire of it by their disorders. Maxims of Heroism had made them a nation of Conquerors; maxims of Tyranny degraded them. When the subjected universe furnished no more exercise for their valour, they turned their arms against their Country. In her Generals Rome now found enemies. The Citizens, forgetting the dignity of their character, sold themselves to the Ambitious; and Men who till then looked upon it as a matter of indifference to live, if they did not live to command, in cool blood preferred Slavery to the charms of Liberty. Agitated by these violent shocks, the Empire could not long subsist; but it was not suspected that

its destroyers were to be an obscure people, till then unknown on the scene of the world.

The Barbarians who inhabited the North, spread, like a torrent, on the Rhine, and afterwards in other countries. Temerity, which has almost always overturned empires, has almost always founded them. Had these new conquerors been only brave, people would not have despaired of opposing them; they were bold to rashness, and thereby struck an apprehension which made them be thought invincible. Fixed by terror or by victory in the finest provinces of Europe, these brigands introduced their manners in them. Void of any principles of society and polity, they knew no law but that of Force. Their Head was properly only the General of their armies, and their government a military power, which is not easy to be defined. They had never any Laws, or they were broke with impunity, because no one had sufficient authority to maintain them. The faults of a Soldier were sometimes punished, those of a Citizen were sure to be overlooked.

There have been Conquerors of so much moderation, to submit to the customs of the people

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people they had reduced, when those customs were thought favourable to the public utility. The Anglo-Saxons followed other maxims. To the title of Conquerors they were jealous to add that of Legislators. To a scepter of iron they added a vicious government. They introduced into their new conquests almost all the customs received in their mother country.

Their government was neither a Monarchy, nor an Aristocracy, nor a Democracy; it was a strange composition of all three. The king, the great men, and the people shared the authority. Opposite views always prevented the three powers from uniting. Personal interest was the soul of all their councils, of all their resolutions, of all their enterprises. A government good in itself supports the weakness of the Sovereign, and this abused it; extinguishes civil contentions, and this kindled them; unites the different parties in a state, and this divided them. The Anglo-Saxons were deceived in imagining that their polity would be more perfect in proportion as it was shared among several. The experience of every age should have taught them, that this policy, instead
of

of the advantages of the three forms of government, took in only their inconveniencies. Such an equilibrium necessarily destroyed all subordination, and all harmony.

Perhaps it was not possible to establish at that time a pure Monarchy; neither the Conquerors nor the Vanquished, probably, had that gentleness of manners which this kind of rule requires. But had their leaders been men of discernment, they would have seen, that one of the three powers ought necessarily to rule, and the two others be destined to temper its authority.

This system, or, if you will, this confusion of policy lasted six hundred years. The English saw the government of their neighbours grow to perfection; but they did not change their principles. Employed in their private quarrels, and confined in their island, they had neither time to forget their laws, nor prudence to adopt the maxims of other nations. The state was agitated by frequent revolutions. The seven kingdoms were reduced to one; the scepter of the Saxons passed into the hands of Danish princes, and repassed into those of the Saxons: the Laws continued still the same.

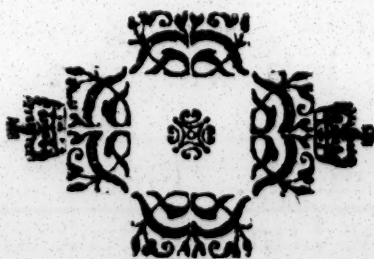
Incapable

Parliament of England. I I

Incapable of bending, either by insinuation or force, these Islanders obstinately retained their polity. Softness of manners, and the science of government made less progress among them than among any nation whatever.

The declension, the fall of such an empire was unavoidable. Edward the Confessor, a prince more simple than politic, more weak than generous, more indolent than active, whom legends have placed among the greatest Saints, and History among the most indifferent Monarchs, ascending the throne of his fathers, prepared the way for a revolution. As Nature had not given him any thing of what makes a Hero, the distresses he underwent in his youth, had not made him great; but they had inspired him with that virtue which is perhaps the most seldom seen on a throne, Gratitude. Forced by the usurpation of the Danes to seek an asylum in some foreign country, William the Bastard, duke of Normandy, gave him that brilliant reception, which ought to touch a good mind, but which charms too much a common soul, and which perhaps would have humbled

humbled a generous mind. The English, weary of a foreign yoke, or from pure inconstancy, asked the restoration of the royal line. The earl Goodwin, who ruled the state, and who wanted to continue to rule it, made them chuse Edward, whose character favoured his views. The new monarch suffered in fact the sceptre to be vilified; but he made provision for its passing into such hands as were capable of restoring all its lustre.



FIRST EPOCH.

*William I. surnamed the Bastard,
and afterwards the Conqueror,
establisbes Despotism in England,
A. D. 1066.*

THE death of the last king of the English left the throne a prey to the ambition of three rivals, who had each some advantages on his side for ascending it. Edgar was called to it by his birth; Harold by a numerous party; William by the testament of the late king. The first was descended of the Monarchs of the country. The second was son of an ambitious minister, who had prepared the way for his elevation. The third reigned in Normandy with great reputation and dignity. Edgar was easily set aside; the royal blood, which ran in his veins, could not balance, in such a tempestuous region as England, the forces of his competitors, who both deserved to sway the sceptre. Harold was the man in England most powerful, most feared, most esteemed, and yet most beloved. He had probity,

probity, but it was that probity which a private man, who aspires to a throne, may have. Praises, caresses, and services cost him nothing when they promoted his elevation; he so artfully put the change on his creatures, that they thought him generous, whereas he was only ambitious. William was born great, had acquired much experience, and sufficiently proved the favours of Fortune to make him hope for more. The ignominy of his birth exposed his youth to the treachery of his competitors, the arms of his enemies, and the revolt of his subjects; but his courage and his talents were thereby more early displayed, and shone with the greater lustre. Forced by circumstances to a continual exertion of his courage, his strength, and his politics, he had the advantage to augment them; age did not lessen them; and what History has seldom occasion to note, William was advanced in years when he began to be a conqueror.

Harold already wore the crown: this possession gave him the air of a legitimate prince, and threw the odious appearances of usurper on whoever dared to dispute it with him. William was not diverted from
his

his enterprize by this obstacle. A fleet of 900 sail carried him to the coast of England; 50,000 men, whom he had himself formed for war, followed him. His foot slipping as he was coming on shore, and falling on his face, he saw Superstition alarmed with the presage: his presence of mind turned the augury to his advantage: he cried out with a gaiety, that communicated itself to the most timid; *I take possession of England; it is mine, I seize it with both my hands.* After having burnt his vessels, to leave his followers no resource but their courage, William went in quest of the enemy, to take advantage of the first ardour of armies that are led to conquest. Harold would have justified the esteem, which the nation had honoured him with in raising him to the throne, had he avoided an engagement which his rival wanted to bring on; happily for the Normans, the English monarch consulted more his valour than his prudence; he might have conquered without drawing a sword; he lost his crown, his glory, and his life, fighting valiantly.

The remains of the English army took refuge with precipitation within the walls of London,

London, where they were deliberating with that confusion which is always consequent on a grievous and sudden misfortune, when the approach of the victorious army fixed the irresolution of the multitude. The lords, magistrates, and prelates then assembled, unanimously conjured William to take the reins of government: this prince, feigning to forget the right which he had asserted before his conquest, seemed to hesitate whether he should accept the throne. It was not owing to him, if they did not imagine he did violence to himself in putting on his head a crown for which he had encountered so many dangers, and shed so much blood. The run of historians relate, that the Conqueror took an oath to hold the sceptre on the same conditions as the Saxon kings, and to maintain the laws. This opinion is supported by William's character. He was too prudent to give such early intimation to his new subjects of his inclination to establish a despotic government.

The most fortunate days of those happy reigns which History hath always proposed as models, are much inferior to the perfect
idea

idea which is given us of the beginning of William's administration. England, always, or almost always, placed under an evil constellation, now received the benign influences of a more favourable planet; and the tranquillity of this state, hitherto so violently agitated, seemed fixed on foundations to last for ever. The example of the head determined the behaviour of the members. Every Norman, it is true, looked upon himself as the Conqueror of England; but this proud pretension was not accompanied by haughtiness, and only produced politeness. The victorious troops treated the conquered people with a gentleness, which, to the shame of humanity, has been seldom seen in any age, but which in those barbarous times was unknown. Clear and judicious laws insured the happiness of the English, and established order among the Normans. Ordonnances in most states serve only for ostentation; those of the new king were solid supports of a perfect polity and equity. The happy experience of such a wise and moderate government extinguished even to the alarms which a conquered people always conceive for their

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liberty.

liberty. In the space of a few months the English looked on the late revolutions as a signal favour from Heaven, which had led them to happiness by a way that ought naturally to have destroyed it.

When we consider the humour of William and the character of the English, we are not surprised that the mutual confidence which was the basis of the public tranquillity, should cease; we can scarce conceive how it could be established. William was naturally distrustful; and his suspicions suggested to him injurious and excessive precautions to prevent any revolution. The English, always on their guard against the best kings, were not to depend much on the word of an ambitious prince, who had just brought them under the yoke. The one was born severe, and was, besides, excited to rigorous measures by the Normans, it being much more for their advantage to see the English subdued by force, than gained by mildness. The others not unfrequently confounded inflexibility with firmness, pride with courage, insolence with liberty. The one side had contracted immense debts to defray the expences of the armament which
had

Parliament of England. 19

had subdued the island; and they proposed to pay those debts, and satisfy their avarice at the expence of the vanquished. The other side thought themselves sufficiently unfortunate to be brought into subjection, without being farther obliged to lavish their treasure to a distant people whom they hated. William was greatly prepossessed in favour of the companions of his victories; and this prepossession made him overlook the disorders they were guilty of: the minds of the English could not fail to be embittered against strangers who had discovered superior courage and conduct.

These different dispositions kindled a flame which put the kingdom several times in a combustion. The nation no longer looked on the moderation of the conquering king than as a studied artifice to lull or seduce the multitude. Some slight commotions, secretly excited to keep up a spirit of sedition among the people, were the fatal prelude of a more general and better supported revolution. Factions multiplied; they were successively fomented by prince Edgar, the Danes, Scots, and one time even by the Normans. William appeared

quite himself on these occasions. His penetration sometimes foresaw the storms forming at a distance; the extent of his genius often found means to dissipate them; the firmness of his courage always surmounted them. Every revolt added lustre to his Glory, and weight to the Yoke of the English.

The mind of the Monarch, however, was filled with suspicions against his subjects. He became habituated to look upon them as enemies the more exasperate, that they had no ground for their enmity. He found that these Islanders were not made to be governed by the ordinary ways of prudence, and that it was more difficult to restrain, than to reduce them. He went so far as to persuade himself that he had formed a wrong judgment of the character of the people whom he had subdued. His maxim was, that the English ought to be managed with firmness; and being naturally too rigorous, he looked on the conduct he had observed in the beginning of his reign, as improper. William from this time ruled no more with the sceptre, but with the sword. The right of conquest was carried

Parliament of England. 21

as far as it would go. He stript the English of their privileges, seized their effects, and gave them other laws. Arbitrary power was established in its full extent; and a people who wanted to shake off the authority of the laws, were forced to groan under despotic rule.

One must be an Englishman, not to reckon William the Conqueror one of the few kings who have done honour to the throne. In whatever age he had lived, he would have been a great man; in those barbarous times in which he had his birth, he was a prodigy. He had all the shining qualities which dazzle the eyes of the multitude; an air of dignity, which bespeaks a Hero, or a prince whom Heaven plainly intended should rise to be one; a strength of body, which excited admiration and surprise; a valour which despised and surmounted the greatest dangers; a good fortune, which knew no reverse, nor even any advantages but what were considerable. He merited, however, the admiration of posterity by talents more rare and valuable. Those who know William only by his successes, are not the persons who esteem him

him most. His character displays itself more fully to those who weigh the obstacles he had to surmount in founding his new empire. He was obliged to have a right, either real, or apparent; this he procured by his address: he was obliged to blind the eyes of France with respect to the consequences of his expedition; he lulled it asleep by his compliances: he was obliged to make the neighbouring princes come into his views; he brought them into them by his insinuation: he was obliged to procure the support of the court of Rome, so powerful in those ages of ignorance; he gained it by promises: he was obliged to prevent the distrust of a rival already crowned; he astonished him by his celerity: he was obliged to conquer a great kingdom with a force not numerous; he effected it by his boldness: he was obliged to prevent or break the conspiracies which were daily formed either against his authority or his person; he succeeded therein by his diligence: he was obliged to insure the obedience of the English, as it was dangerous to trust to their affection; he did it by introducing despotism. Satire has
drawn

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drawn this great Prince in the most odious colours. It is nevertheless true, that the Nation which detests him, owes to him her glory. Unknown or despised hitherto in Europe, the English now began to make a considerable figure by their learning, their power, their commerce, and their conquests.



S E C O N D E P O C H.

King John, surnamed Lackland, degrades the royal authority, by granting the grand charter in 1215.

TH E S E valuable advantages did not make the English forget that they had been free. We accustom ourselves to the yoke when it is formed insensibly; sudden despotism revolts us. The shocks which the state felt at this time unhappily make us think that a prince and his subjects have contrary interests. The English made this destructive error the principle of their conduct. Scarce was the Conqueror in his grave, when they tumultuously demanded the re-establishment of their ancient customs. His immediate successors amused the nation, William II. by great promises, Henry I. by a charter, which was never executed. The laws imposed by the Conqueror gradually acquired strength; they seemed to be established on very solid foundations when John Lackland ascended the throne.

This

Parliament of England. 25

This prince, whom his troubles, crimes, and misfortunes have rendered famous, was equally deficient in the virtues which adorn a diadem or a private station; and possessed the vices of every condition of life. He had no wit but to hurt, no fire but to embroil, no courage but to destroy. War and peace were equally a burden to him. By his imprudence he entered into every affair of importance, and by his incapacity always extricated himself shamefully. He despised future misfortunes, but was depressed by present evils. When he shed blood, it was less from cruelty than to shew his power. Prosperity and adversity equally lessened him, the one by elevating, and the other by depressing him too much. The means he made use of to draw money from his people, made him be thought avaricious, he was rather lavish. To great wickedness he joined so much stupidity, that he never made any advantage of his crimes. Void of all sentiments of religion and honour, he was as much at a loss in affairs that required address and expedients, as if he had been only sollicitous to act with integrity.

This

Such

Such was the English monarch who suffered the dangerous factions, which had so long agitated the throne, to recover new life. From a contempt of his person, which a thousand horrors inspired, they proceeded to a contempt of his dignity. It was determined that it should be depressed, to erect liberty, or rather, independency, on its ruins.

The Barons who formed this design, were precisely the only men in the nation who had no right, not even the least shadow of any, to demand the re-establishment of the Saxon laws digested by Edward the Confessor. They were descendants of the first Normans, in whose favour these laws had been abrogated. The Conqueror had stript the English of all their fiefs, to give them to the lords of his party who had followed him to England. If William had no right to *change* the government, the barons were usurpers; if he had a right, it was unjust in the barons to want to *restore* it. As they were emboldened by the weakness of the prince, and not by the justice of their cause, they persisted in their claims, and put cardinal Langton, archbishop of Canterbury, at their head.

This

This prelate, a factious and violent man, was born for the part which he was going to act. To the duplicity of an artful courtier, he joined all the boldness of a wicked ecclesiastic; and to the political interest which united the conspirators, he added the religious bond of a solemn oath. He gave new ardour to the league by his character, and furnished them with new pretexts by his address in recovering the charter of Henry I. already forgot, by which the laws of St. Edward were confirmed.

When the design was pretty well ripened, and their measures properly taken, they haughtily laid their proud pretensions before their king, surprised and irritated at such a proceeding: he asked some time to consider of them. His answer was such as was expected, and such as they ought to have expected. *The traitors, said he, have forgot to demand my crown. Let them not expect to extort from me privileges which would make me their slave. I am king, and will continue to be so.*

This denial was the signal for war. The barons formed some enterprises which succeeded. The city of London entered into the

the confederacy; and it was resolved to besiege the king in the tower. While preparations were making for this siege, circular letters were wrote to all the lords of the king's party, and to those who were still neuter, acquainting them in plain terms, that if they did not join in the common cause, no measures would be kept with them. The menace fully succeeded. The king saw himself universally abandoned, and this defection rendered him weak or tractable. He gave notice to the lords that he was disposed to grant their demands. A meeting was held to conclude the important affair. The act which was drawn up, was called *Magna Charta*, and has served for a pretext to all the civil wars which have since rent England. Here follows that celebrated piece.

The Charter of Liberties, or the Great Charter, granted by King John to his Subjects in the year 1255.

JOHN by the grace of God king of England, &c. To the Archbishops, Bishops, Earls, Barons, &c. Know ye, that
we,

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we, in the presence of God, and for the health of our soul, and the souls of our ancestors and heirs, and to the honour of God, and the exaltation of holy church, and amendment of our kingdom, by advice of our venerable fathers, Stephen archbishop of Canterbury, primate of all England, and cardinal of the holy Roman church; Henry archbishop of Dublin, William bishop of London, and others our liegemen; have, in the first place, granted to God, and by this our present charter, confirmed for us and our heirs for ever,

I.

That the church of England shall be free, and enjoy her rights entire and liberties inviolable. And we will have them so to be observed, that it may appear from hence, that the freedom of elections, which was reckoned most necessary for the church of England, and which we granted and confirmed by our charter, before the discord between us and our barons, was granted of mere free will; which charter we shall observe, and do will it to be faithfully observed by our heirs for ever.

II. We

II.

We have also granted to all the freemen of our kingdom, for us and our heirs for ever, all the under-written liberties, to have and to hold, they and their heirs, of us and our heirs.

III.

If any of our earls, barons, or others, who hold of us in chief by military service, shall die, and at the time of his death his heir shall be of full age to enter on his fief, such heir shall only pay the antient tax; that is to say, the heir of an earl, for a whole earl's barony, by a hundred marcs; the heir of a baron, for a whole barony, by a hundred shillings; and he that oweth less shall give less, according to the antient custom of fees.

IV.

But if the heir of any such shall be under age, his lord, of whom he holds his fief, shall not have the wardship of him before he hath received his homage; and after such heir shall attain to the age of twenty one, he shall be put in possession of his inheritance, without paying any fine to the lord; yet so that if he be made a knight while under age,

age, his lands shall remain, nevertheless, in the custody of the lord, until the aforesaid time.

V.

The wardens of the land of such heir, who shall be under age, shall take of the land of such heir only reasonable issues, reasonable customs, and reasonable services (a), and that without destruction and waste of the men or things: and if we shall commit the guardianship of those lands to the sheriff, or any other, who is answerable to us for the issues of the land, and if he shall make destruction and waste upon the ward-lands, we will compel him to give satisfaction, and the land shall be committed to lawful and discreet tenants of that fee, who shall be answerable for the issues to us, or to him whom we shall assign.

(a) By issues, are meant, the rents and profits issuing out, or coming of the lands or tenements of the ward. By customs, things due by custom or prescription, and appendant to the lands or tenements in ward; as advowsons, commons, stray, &c. also fines of tenants by copy of court-roll. By services, the drudgery and labour due from copy-holders to their lords.

VI. The

VI.

The wardens of the lands shall keep up and maintain the houses, parks, warrens, ponds, mills, and other things pertaining to the land, out of the issues of the same land; and shall restore to the heir, when he comes of full age, his whole land stocked with ploughs and carriages, according as the time of wainage shall require, and the issues of the land can reasonably bear. And all these things shall be observed in the custodies of vacant archbishopricks, bishopricks, priories, abbeys, churches, except that these wardships are not to be sold.

VII.

Heirs shall be married according to their rank, and before matrimony be contracted, those who are nearest to the heir in blood shall be made acquainted with it.

VIII.

A widow, after the death of her husband, shall forthwith, and without any difficulty, have liberty to marry, and have her inheritance; nor shall she give any thing for her dower, or this liberty to marry, or her inheritance which her husband and she held at the day of his death: and she may remain
in

in the mansion-house of her husband, forty days after his death ; within which term her dower shall be assigned, if it was not assigned before. But if the mansion-house was a fortified castle, a complete house shall be provided for her, where she may live decently, till her dower be assigned ; and she shall, in the mean time, have a competent maintenance out of the common revenue of her and her deceased husband. The dower shall be settled at the third part of all her husband's lands, unless it was settled at less by the marriage contract.

IX.

No widow shall be compelled, by seizing her goods, to marry herself so long as she has a mind to live without a husband. But yet she shall give security that she will not marry without our assent, if she holds of us ; or without the consent of the lord of whom she holds, if she holds of another.

X.

Neither we nor our bailiffs shall seize any land, or rent, for any debt, so long as there shall be chattels of the debtor's upon the premises, sufficient to pay the debt, and the debtor be ready to satisfy it. Nor shall the

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sureties

34 *The History of the*

fureties of the debtor be distrained, so long as the principal debtor is sufficient for the payment of the debt.

XI.

And if the principal debtor fail in the payment of the debt, not having wherewithal to pay it, or will not discharge it when he is able, then the sureties shall answer the debt, and if they will, they shall have the lands and rents of the debtor, until they shall be satisfied for the debt which they paid for him ; unless the principal debtor can shew himself acquitted thereof, against the said sureties.

XII.

If any one have borrowed any thing of the Jews, more or less, and dies before the debt be satisfied, there shall be no interest paid for that debt, so long as the heir is under age, of whomsoever he may hold : and if the debt falls into our hands, we will take only the chattel mentioned in the charter or instrument.

XIII.

And if any one shall die indebted to the Jews, his wife shall have her dower, and pay nothing of that debt ; and if the deceased

Parliament of England. 35

ceased left children under age, they shall have necessaries provided for them according to the real estate of the deceased, and out of the residue the debt shall be paid; saving however the service of the lords. In like manner let it be with the debts due to other persons than Jews.

XIV.

No *Scutage* (b) or aid shall be imposed in our kingdom, unless by the common council of our kingdom, except to redeem our person, and to make our eldest son a knight, and once to marry our eldest daughter; and for this there shall only be paid a reasonable aid.

XV.

In like manner it shall be concerning the aids of the city of London, which shall have all its antient liberties, and free customs, as well by land as by water.

(b) *Scutage* was military service, due to the king from the tenants in chief. It is to be understood also of what the feudataries paid the king in lieu of that service, and likewise of the tax which was imposed on each vassal for the service of the publick.

XVI.

Furthermore, we will and grant that all other cities and burroughs, and towns, and barons of the cinque ports, shall have all their liberties and free customs; and shall send deputies to the common council of the kingdom to settle the assessment of their aids, except in the three cases mentioned Art. XIV.

XVII.

And for the assessing of Scutages we shall cause to be summoned the archbishops, bishops, abbots, earls, and great barons of the realm singly by our letters.

XVIII.

And furthermore, we shall cause to be summoned in general by our sheriffs, and bailiffs, all others who hold of us in chief, forty days (before their meeting) at least, to a certain place; and in all letters of such summons, we will declare the cause of the summons.

XIX.

And summons being thus made, the business shall proceed on the day appointed, according to the advice of such as shall be

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be present, although all, that were summoned, come not.

XX.

We will not for the future grant to any one, that he may take aid of his own free-tenants, unless to ransom his body; and to make his eldest son a knight, and once to marry his eldest daughter; and for this there shall only be paid a reasonable aid.

XXI.

No man's goods shall be distrained, to compel him to perform more service for a knight's fee, or other free tenement, than is due from thence.

XXII.

The court of common pleas shall not follow our person, but shall be holden in some certain place: trials upon the writs of *novel disseisin*, and of *mort d'ancestor*, and of *darreine presentment* (c), shall be taken but

(c) A writ of *assize of novel disseisin* lies, where a tenant, for ever, or for life, is put out and disseised of his lands or tenements, rents, common of pasture, common way, or of an office, toll, &c. that he may recover his right. A writ of *mort d'ancestor*, is that

in their proper counties and after this manner: We, or (if we shall be out of the realm) our chief justiciary, shall send two justiciaries through every county four times a year; who with the four knights, chosen out of every shire by the people, shall hold the said assizes in the county, on the day, and at the place, appointed.

XXIII.

The matters which cannot be determined at one assize, cannot be tried in another place of the circuit of the same judges; and such matters, as, by reason of their difficulties, cannot be decided by those judges, shall be brought to the court of king's bench.

XXIV.

All matters relating to the *darriene presentment* to churches shall be brought to the king's bench, and there determined.

which lies, where any of a man's near relations die, seized of lands, rents, or tenements, and after their deaths a stranger seizes upon them. A writ of *darreine presentment* lies, where a man and his ancestors have presented to a church, and after it is become void, a stranger presents thereto, whereby the person having right is disturbed.

XXV.

XXV.

A freeman shall not be amerced for a small fault, but for a great crime, and in proportion to the heinousness of it, saving to him the means of his livelihood; and after the same manner a merchant, saving to him what is necessary to carry on his commerce.

XXVI.

And a villain shall be amerced after the same manner, saving to him his carts and implements of husbandry, if he falls under our mercy; and none of the aforesaid amerciaments shall be assessed but by the oath of twelve reputed honest men of the neighbourhood.

XXVII.

Earls and barons shall not be amerced but by their peers, and according to the quality of the offence.

XXVIII.

No ecclesiastical person shall be amerced according to the value of his ecclesiastical benefice, but according to his lay-tenement, and the quality of his offence.

XXIX.

Neither a town, nor any person, shall be distrained to make bridges over rivers, unless that anciently and of right they are bound to do it,

XXX.

No river, for the future, shall be imbanked, but what was imbanked in the time of Henry I,

XXXI.

No sheriff, constable (e), coroners, or other our bailiffs, shall hold pleas of the crown.

XXXII.

All counties, hundreds, wapentakes, and trethings, shall stand at the old ferm, without any increase, except in our demesne lands.

XXXIII.

If any one that holds of us a lay fee, dies, and the sheriff or our bailiff bring proof of the debt due to us from the deceased; it shall be lawful for the sheriff or our bailiff to attach and register the chattels of the de-

(e) Constable is here taken for constable of a castle. They were men in ancient times of account and authority.
ceased

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ceased found upon his lay fee, to the value of the debt, by the view of lawful men, so as nothing be removed until our whole debt be paid; and the rest shall be left to the executors to fulfil the will of the deceased: and if there be nothing due from him to us, all the chattels shall remain to the deceased, saving to his wife and children their reasonable shares.

XXXIV.

If any freeman dies intestate, his chattels shall be distributed by the hands of his nearest relations and friends, by view of the church, saving to every one his debts, which the deceased owed.

XXXV.

No constable nor bailiff of ours shall take corn or other chattels of any man, who is not of the town where the castle is, unless he presently gives him money for it, or hath respite of payment from the seller. But if the seller be of the same town, he shall pay him in forty days.

XXXVI.

No constable shall distrain any knight to give money for castle-guard, if he himself shall do it in his own person, or by another
able

able man in case he shall be hindered by any reasonable cause.

XXXVII.

And if we shall lead him, or if we shall send him, into the army, he shall be free, for the time he shall be in the army, from castle-guard, for his fee.

XXXVIII.

No sheriff or bailiff of ours, or any other, shall take horses or carts to carry our baggage, without paying according to the rate anciently appointed, that is to say, for a cart and two horses, ten pence a day; and for a cart with three horses fourteen pence a day.

XXXIX.

No demesne cart of any ecclesiastical person, or knight, or any lady, shall be taken by our officers; neither shall we or our officers take any man's timber for our castles, or other uses, unless by the consent of the owner of the timber.

XL.

We will retain the lands of those that are convicted of felony but one year and a day, and then they shall be delivered to the lord of the fee.

XLI.

XLI.

All wares for the time to come shall be demolished in the rivers of Thames and Medway, and throughout all England, except upon the sea-coast.

XLII.

The writ, which is called *Præcipe* (e), for the future, shall not be granted, whereby a freeman may lose his cause.

XLIII.

There shall be one measure of wine and one of ale, through our whole realm, and one measure of corn: that is to say, the London-quarter; and one breadth of cloth, that is to say, two ells within the list; and the weights shall be the same through the whole kingdom.

XLIV.

From henceforward nothing shall be given or taken for a writ of inquisition (f), from

(e) The writ called *Præcipe quod reddat* from the first words in it, has several uses. It signifies in general an order from the king, or some court of justice, to put in possession one that complains of having been unjustly outed.

(f) This was a writ directed to the sheriff, to en-

him

him that desires an inquisition of life or limbs, but shall be granted gratis, and not denied.

XLV.

If any one holds of us by fee-farm, or socage, or burgage (g), and holds lands of another by military service, we will not have the wardship of the heir or land, which belongs to another man's fee, by reason of what he holds of us by fee-farm, socage or burgage: nor will we have the wardship of the fee-farms, socage or burgage, unless the fee-farm is bound to perform military service.

XLVI.

We will not have the wardship of an heir, nor of any land, which he holds of another by military service, by reason of any petit-serjeanty he holds of us, as by the service of giving us daggers, arrows, or the like.

quire, whether a man committed to prison on suspicion of murder, was committed on just cause of suspicion, or only out of malice and ill-will.

(g) To hold in fee-farm, is when there is some rent reserved by the lord upon the creation of the tenancy. In socage, upon condition of plowing the lord's land, and doing other inferior offices of husbandry: and in burgage, when the inhabitants of a borough held their tenements of the king at a certain rent.

XLVII.

XLVII.

No bailiff for the future shall compel any man to purge himself by oath, upon his single accusation, without credible witnesses produced to prove it.

XLVIII.

No freeman shall be taken, or imprisoned, or disseised of his freehold, or liberties, or free customs, or out-lawed, or banished, or any ways destroyed; unless by the legal judgment of his peers, or by the law of the land.

XLIX.

We will sell to no man, we will deny no man, nor delay, right nor justice.

L.

All merchants, unless they be publicly prohibited, shall have safe and secure conduct to go out of, and to come into England; and to stay there, and to pass as well by land as by water, to buy and sell by the ancient and allowed customs, without any evil tolls, except in time of war, or when they shall be of any nation in war with us.

LI.

And if there shall be found any such in our land in the beginning of a war, they shall

shall be attached, without damage to their bodies or goods, until it may be known unto us, or our chief justiciary, how our merchants be treated in the nation at war with us; and if ours be safe there, they shall be safe in our land.

LII.

It shall be lawful for the time to come, for any one to go out of our kingdom, and return safely and securely by land or by water, saving his allegiance to us; unless in time of war, by some short space, for the common benefit of the kingdom; except prisoners and out-laws (according to the law of the land) and people in war with us, and merchants who shall be in such condition as is above-mentioned.

LIII.

If any man holds of any escheat, as of the honour of Wallingford, Nottingham, Bologne, Lancaster, or of other escheats which are in our hands, and are baronies, and dies, his heir shall not give any other relief, nor perform any other service to us than he would to the baron, if the barony were in possession of the baron; we will hold it after the same manner the baron held it.

Nor

Nor will we, by reason of such barony or escheat, have any escheat or wardship of any of our men, unless he that held the barony or escheat, held of us in chief elsewhere.

LIV.

Those men who dwell without the forest, from henceforth shall not come before our justiciaries of the forest upon summons; but such as are impleaded, or are pledges for any that were attached for something concerning the forest.

LV.

All woods that have been taken into the forests, by king Richard our brother, shall forthwith be laid out again, unless they were our demesne lands.

LVI.

No freemen for the future shall give or sell any more of his land, but so that out of the residue, the service due to the lord of the fee may be sufficiently performed.

LVII.

All barons, who are founders of abbeyes, and have charters of the kings of England for the advowson, or are entitled to it by
ancient

shall be attached, without damage to their bodies or goods, until it may be known unto us, or our chief justiciary, how our merchants be treated in the nation at war with us; and if ours be safe there, they shall be safe in our land.

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LVII.

All barons, who are founders of abbeys, and have charters of the kings of England for the advowson, or are entitled to it by
ancient

ancient tenure, may have the custody of them, when void, as they ought to have.

LVIII.

No man shall be taken or imprisoned, upon the appeal of a woman, for the death of any other man than her husband.

LIX.

No county-court for the future shall be holden, but from month to month; and where there used to be a greater interval, let it be so continued.

LX.

Neither any sheriff, nor his bailiff, shall keep his turn in the hundred oftener than twice in a year, that is, once after Easter, and once after Michaelmas, and only in the accustomed place; and the view of *Frank-pledge* shall be held after Michaelmas, without oppression, and so that every one shall have his liberties, which he had and was wont to have in the time of king Henry our grandfather, or such as he obtained afterwards.

LXI.

But the view of *Frank-pledge* shall be so made, that our peace may be kept, and that the tything be full, as it was wont to be.

LXII.

LXII.

And the sheriffs shall not seek causes to oppress any one, but shall be content with what the sheriff was wont to have for making his view in the time of king Henry I.

LXIII.

For the time to come it shall not be lawful for any man to give his land to a religious house, so as to take it again, and hold it of that house.

LXIV.

Nor shall it be lawful for any religious house to receive land, so as to grant it to him again of whom they received it, to hold of him. If any man for the future shall so give his land to a religious house, and be convicted thereof, his gift shall be void, and the land shall be forfeited to the lord of the fee.

LXV.

Scutage for the future shall not be taken as it was used to be taken in the time of Henry I. The sheriff shall oppress no man, but be content with what he was wont to have.

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LXVI.

LXVI.

All the aforesaid customs and liberties which we have granted, to be holden in our kingdom, as much as it belongs to us towards our people ; all our subjects, as well clergy as laity, shall observe as far as they are concerned, towards their dependents.

LXVII.

Saving to the archbishops, bishops, abbots, priors, templars, hospitallers, earls, barons, knights, and all others, as well ecclesiasticks as seculars, the liberties and free customs which they had before.

These being witnesses, &c.

WE may make two important observations on this grand charter : the first, that the privileges contained in it are a concession on the part of the king, as is noted, in express terms, in the beginning of the act : the second, that these privileges regard only the liberty of the subject, and an exemption from any extraordinary tax without the consent of the barons.

It is not easy to conceive, and impossible to express, what passed in the king's breast, when

when he seriously reflected on the meanness he had just been guilty of. Indebted to his ancestors for his glory, and accountable to his descendants for his authority, he was distracted to think that by one step he had blasted the one, and ruined the other. Devoid of any fear of crimes, this prince was afraid of infamy. His own blood, or that of his enemies was to re-establish his reputation. He had sworn his own dishonour, he swore much more sincerely his revenge.

Innocent III. that haughty pontiff who possessed every virtue but those of his station, became his resource. The heads of the church had for a considerable time wickedly broke through the limits prescribed them by Heaven. Weary of edifying the universe by their Piety, they began to astonish it by their Ambition. They ruled Christendom according to the sport of their passions; they regarded thrones as simple sieves of their Tiara; and modern Rome with her Bulls wanted to dispose of kingdoms as arbitrarily as ancient Rome had done with her Armies. By these odious pretensions was the conduct of the court of Rome regulated. Those kings who had magnanimity enough

to support the rights of their crown, were excommunicated, deposed, and their subjects freed from their oaths of allegiance. The precious bond which unites sovereigns and their people, was broken, and in their masters nations now beheld tyrants. The crowns of the greatest monarchs tottered on their heads, and the days of the best kings were in danger. A revolt supported by religious motives, and insured of impunity, knows no bounds. King John himself had experienced all these horrors. Chance or his own imprudence had embroiled him with Innocent; to make up the difference it had cost him his independency. It was by submitting his Person and his Crown to the Holy See that he emerged from the abyss into which the thunders of the pope and the superstition of the people had thrown him: London became tributary to Rome.

The king, whose despair composed all his policy, sought in the past evil a remedy for his present situation. A distant master appeared to him less odious than a multitude of domestic tyrants. He represented the enterprises of the barons, to the pope, as an encroachment on the rights of the court
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of Rome. Innocent seldom quitted the *glaive* : he made use of it against the rebels, whom he excommunicated; and absolved the oppressed monarch from the promises and oaths which violence had extorted from him. John counted much on these excommunications, and still more on an armed force. His character and situation drew about him the banditti of all Europe, whom he flattered with views of very considerable settlements, and who promised themselves an immense booty. With these troops, who were such as it behoved him to have, this prince carried fire and sword into all parts of England.

The English lords, who, in commencing the war, had foreseen every thing but this deluge of foreigners, were fully sensible of the danger of their situation. What must their embarras, or rather their despair, have been, when they asked France for a master and an avenger ? Philip the August reigned there with a dignity unknown since Charlemagne. This prince was more than a conqueror, he was a great king. He is reproached with having committed some mistakes at the head of his armies ; he never

made any in his council. His greatness of soul despising easy conquests, and his good-sense fruitless ones, he employed himself in the useful and noble work of destroying the fiefs, and the great vassals. By executing, at least in part, a project so glorious, this powerful genius reanimated, if I may so speak, the ashes of Monarchy. He began with rendering the French happy, he finished with making them formidable.

The lustre of such a shining reign had dazzled the English lords, and fixed their vows. Lewis, eldest son of France, was proclaimed king of England. A crown is seldom refused. Philip and Lewis accepted that which was offered them; the first, to weaken a too-powerful enemy; and the second from a vanity attendant on young men. In vain did Innocent, to hinder them, threaten the one and the other. While the father endeavoured to soften the pope by excuses, the son went with seven hundred sail to fulfil his destiny. At his arrival, the whole island bent before him. The principal lords flocked to do him homage. He made his entry with them into London, less as a conqueror, than as a legitimate prince, who

who took possession of a crown that was his right. The Capital drew after it the other towns, when the Legate, lancing the thunders of the Church against Lewis, put a stop to the revolution.

The fugitive king ought to have seized this precious moment to soften his people: he made use of it to exasperate them still more by his burnings and ravages. The inaction he had lived in since the landing of his competitor, changed into a barbarous phrensy, which he communicated to his adventurers, or which he received from them. The counties which adhered to him, and those that did not, were equally reduced to ashes. He seemed to have conceived the frantic design of burying himself under the ruins of his dominions. After having lost almost all, he wanted to deprive himself even of the hope and consolation of being lamented. In these circumstances grief put an end to his crimes. At his death he left his heir Henry III. in the cradle, his enemy on the throne, and his people in the practice of making head against their sovereigns. The hatred of the English was extinguished by John's death. Their aversion to him

turned with redoubled acrimony on the French. Henry's youth excited compassion, and his disposition awakened hope. He was proclaimed king at ten years of age. *Magna Charta*, that occasion of so many tragical scenes, was confirmed by the young Prince. His partisans guarantied his promise, which they took care to make him ratify afterwards; and Lewis, who had accustomed himself to the idea of a crown, crossed the sea again, with much vexation and little glory; he found afterwards in his inheritance a consolation for the loss of his conquest.



T H I R D E P O C H.

*The Parliament established under the
reign of Henry III. A. D. 1234.*

THE great princes found empires, the good establish them, the bad destroy them. The revolution begun under king John ought to hasten to its end under Henry. The minority, which is the weak part of other reigns, was the best of this. William earl of Pembroke, Grand Marshal of England, who had retarded the fall of the father, and procured or hastened the elevation of the son, was charged, in quality of Regent, with the administration of affairs. This celebrated man had fortunately a mind so capacious as to embrace all the parts of government, a heart so elevated as to devote himself to it, and a good fortune so constant as to succeed in it. To the brilliant qualities which gain the multitude, he joined the solid virtues which procure the esteem of good men. He stifled the civil dissensions by which his country had just been rent,
brought

brought back the subjects to their duty, kept the nobility in submission, prevented the complaints of the people, repressed the enterprises of the Factious, gave strength to the Laws, re-established order in the finances, restored discipline among the troops, and insured the tranquillity of the kingdom. These successes were the work of little time, and of much disinterestedness, uprightness, and application. The lustre of these great events was not sullied by any stain. Pembroke really possessed that magnanimity, of which the bare appearance has made so many reputations immortal. He was in every sense a great man, and perhaps the best Patriot England ever had.

The death of the Regent, who, his epitaph tells us, was regarded as a Sun in the council, and a Mars in the army, made the dullest apprehend, that the state had lost the only pilot capable of steering it. As the tranquillity, which the nation enjoyed under Pembroke's administration, was not owing to the laws, but to his abilities, none but such heroic qualities as he possessed, could perpetuate that blessing. Unhappily the young king was born without talents ; and
to

to add to the misfortune received none from Education.

Henry was incapable of guiding a peaceful kingdom, a tractable nation, subjects accustomed to the yoke ; and he took the reins of a monarchy where there were difficult affairs to be negotiated, violent quarrels supported, immense losses repaired, embroiled pretensions discussed, an obstinate league dissipated. To support the weight of the crown in such a conjuncture would have required a sublime genius, profound policy, extensive views, immovable firmness ; the art of pleasing the peevish, employing the turbulent, fixing the inconstant, and contenting the difficult : and Henry was a soft man, who never knew what it was to struggle against any obstacle ; a weak master, who sacrificed his faithful servants to his enemies ; an inconstant prince, who never had a favourite whom he did not disgrace, nor an enemy whom he did not take into favour ; a capricious mind, who engaged in enterprises through inquietude, and desisted by inconstancy ; a mean soul, who had little fear of contempt, and little desire of glory ; a timorous heart, who never had the courage
to

to insure his repose by sacrificing some factious head; a theatrical king, who never acted but a borrowed part, and who had no will of his own.

Such a character was a presage to England of a turbulent, and consequently a bloody reign. These evils were suspended by the address of the two great ministers who replaced the regent, I mean, Peter des Roches, bishop of Winchester, and Hubert des Burgh, grand-justiciary of England. The first was a Frenchman, the second an Englishman. The one had acquired reputation by his talents, and the other by his services. The Frenchman had contributed to the elevation of Henry, the Englishman had stopt the course of Lewis successes. Des Roches knew to make a proper use of the sword of the church, and De Burgh of the sword of the prince. The prelate had the appearance of more virtues; the soldier had more shining ones: both were, or became, greedy of glory, riches, consideration, and authority.

The competition of these two favourites was at first of great use. It animated their zeal, without exciting their jealousy. Emulation changed afterwards into hatred. Each would

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would be first in favour, and highest in authority. To obtain their ends, they took different courses. The Bishop wanted to make himself useful, and the Justiciary agreeable; the first preached up Parsimony, and the second Profusion: one was for the observation of Magna Charta, and the other for Despotism. Des Roches had the ordinary fate of austere ministers, he was sacrificed to the Favourite, who, having no longer a rival, became entire master.

De Burgh, in the first days of his administration, exasperated the nation by making void the Great charter, that subject of eternal division between the king and the barons; and soon after provoked them much more, by letting slip an occasion, always precious to Englishmen, of distressing France. A formidable league threatened that monarchy with a total ruin during the minority of St. Lewis. The count of Boulogne, second son of Philip the August, had entered into it in hopes of usurping the crown; the count of Bretagne to get rid of the homage which he did to the king; the countess of Flanders, from hatred to the regent; the count of Marche to seize the lands that lay
convenient

convenient for him ; the count of Toulouse, to recover the places that had been taken from him ; the count of Provence, from regard to Raimond his relation and friend ; several other lords, to give themselves an air, from caprice, or from levity ; and, as if all these forces united had not been sufficient to overpower an infant king, the rebels associated in their hatred, and in their designs, the king of England.

Blanche of Castille, who, like all celebrated persons, has had almost an equal number of censurers and admirers, was really possessed of high courage and great address. With these two advantages she triumphed over the rebels by dividing them, and over the English by corrupting the covetous De Burgh : this was not the only service which the avarice of that unfaithful minister did France.

Henry was informed of the treacheries of De Burgh, at least he suspected them ; and nevertheless did not change his conduct. Accustomed to dependance this indolent prince would have been embarrassed to be Master. Without entering into a fatiguing examination of the good or bad qualities

qualities of the persons, he employed, he found it more convenient to bear the yoke to which he was accustomed, than to give himself the trouble of making a proper choice, or barely of making another choice. Tumultuous and seditious commotions at length brought the blinded monarch out of his lethargy. The life, or at least the removal of the favourite, was demanded with one voice. Henry, for the first time, sacrificed his inclination to the public resentment. To recover the affections of his subjects, he again swore the observation of the Great Charter, and, what was more agreeable, if possible, to the nation, an eternal enmity to France.

The fall of De Burgh restored to the state a minister who was agreeable to it. But, placed on the throne, if I may so express myself, the bishop of Winchester stifled the generous sentiments which had formerly rendered him the idol of the Public. His reign, still more than his predecessor's, was a reign of haughtiness, duplicity, and violence. Both had the same fate, the prelate, like the grand justiciary, experienced, that if a rival is always troublesome, he is often necessary.

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necessary. The conclusion of the new scene was in the usual way: the king consented to every thing, sent away his favourite, asked pardon, and promised to observe the great charter.

Thus was Henry's reign spent in granting privileges, and revoking them; taking oaths, and breaking them; giving up his authority, and re-assuming it; making himself the slave of his people, and endeavouring to be their tyrant. The nation had been tossed by these billows near thirty years; it was time that order should arise out of the chaos, and the state at length acquire stability. The marriage of the king with Eleanor of Provence hastened this event.

Great numbers of Provençals, who under a fine climate inhabit a bad soil, followed this princess. England appeared to them a kind of conquest, which they were resolved to make the most of. The fire of this ingenious people extends to every thing; fortune, pleasure, glory. On their arrival they wanted to have all their passions gratified. The king, who was more dangerous by his weakness, than tyrants are by their wickedness, complied with their impatience.

These

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These strangers quickly got into their hands all the wealth of the island, and on their heads all the honours of it. Their ambition, which increased with their success, found itself confined by the limits of the royal authority; they broke through them with that audaciousness which is common to fiery tempers and to favourites. The privileges of the nation and the articles of Magna charta were violated with an excess which the nation had never known, nor even ever apprehended.

The English murmured at these evils, and it is rare that Englishmen go no farther than murmuring. A revolt with them sometimes precedes complaint, and never fails to follow it. The capacity of the leader who conducts it, determines its duration and advantages. Unhappily for Henry, the Malcontents engaged in their cabal the most formidable man, I will not say of England, but of all Europe.

Simon Montfort, earl of Leicester, was a Frenchman, and son of that scourge of the Albigeois, who would have been above all commendation, had his virtues equalled his abilities. Heir by his mother to the estate

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of the house of Leicester, he was become an Englishman. His ambition aspired to every thing, and by dint of merit he obtained every thing. The government of Guienne was intrusted to him as the only English lord who had experience enough to subdue the Gascons, and pride enough to humble them. These people could bear with patience no superiority, not even in vice. The character of their governor quite distracted them; and Henry, it is not known for what reason, nor did he know himself, entered into their views. That prince imagined there would be no greater inconvenience in taking away a great place, than in conferring it: he was deceived. Leicester forgot the favour that had been done him in sending him to Guienne, and seemed to remember only the affront put upon him in recalling him. He disdained to justify himself, and haughtily demanded a recompence for his services, less from any hope of obtaining it, than to have a pretence for joining the faction.

No sooner was this hypocrite, or enthusiast, and perhaps both, at the head of the league, than he communicated to it all his
fire.

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fire. Constantly bred up with the most ambitious views, when he thought proper to act, he knew no bounds. He did not stay to loosen the Gordian knot, he cut it. Yet deep in the art of adding fuel to the fire, he appeared to yield only through zeal to the impulses which he himself communicated. To the imposing mask of every virtue, he added the singular talent of giving an air of heroism to all his vices. He astonished his enemies by the brilliancy of his courage; and by the superiority of his genius made himself master of events. His successes carried him beyond his hopes: and his ambition began, if I may so speak, where that of other men is satisfied. It is almost a problem in history, whether Leicester was at one time virtuous, or whether the wrongs done him by the king only unmasked his policy.

The confederates, united, instructed, and strengthen'd by a leader of this character, impatiently expected the decisive moment when they might revenge their private injuries under the respectable standard of publick Liberty. That moment soon came. The late kings of England had, imprudently

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enough,

enough, assembled the great men to have their advice in affairs of importance, or when the state was in danger. The barons had always entertained a desire of aggrandising themselves; in the earlier times they had hopes; and in the issue acquired privileges. Circumstances had been so favourable to them, that they got possession of the power of regulating the extraordinary taxes, and even of the right of imposing them. Henry, more prodigal than his predecessors, had often convoked this assembly, and thereby given it considerable lustre and dignity. His ill fortune or his imprudence made him convene it at Oxford when the minds of the nobility were most sowered and their hearts most alienated.

The king ought to have seen the great danger of his situation, the very first day of the session. The union, order, and subordination of the confederates made him tremble for his liberty; a great prince would have trembled for his glory. The execution of the great Charter, to which they had hitherto confined themselves, was the least of the pretensions they now formed. The reformation of the Church was demanded

manded in the tone of sedition. It was proposed to the king to nominate twelve persons, upon condition the barons should be permitted to nominate as many, who were to decide all publick affairs by a majority of voices. Great dangers place a character in the fullest light: they shew all its greatness or all its littleness. Another, on such an occasion, would have merited a Throne, Henry debased royalty. He meanly consented that the twenty-four commissioners named should have the custody of all the castles, the disposal of all the governments, and the choice of all the great officers of the crown.

These articles, which were called the Statutes or Provisions of Oxford, met with opposition. The earl of Warren thought them hard, Prince Edward unjust, and Henry the king's nephew, humbling; many good subjects found all these defects together in them. The Twenty-four, nevertheless, followed their course; they successfully sapped the rights of the Crown, and strengthened the usurpations of the League. Nothing escaped the vigilance of the Confederates. They made sure of the Interior of the kingdom, by

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banishing the foreigners, those bloodsuckers who had been so long swollen with English blood. To prevent France, of whose tranquillity they were afraid, from taking part in their divisions, they concluded with her a treaty, which they English have since disavowed, and against which the French Writers would have much more reason to exclaim, if they had not canonised even the failings of S. Louis.

The Commissaries were employed in these regulations when the spirit of division, which had overturned the kingdom, got among the confederates. It is often more dangerous to possess distinguished talents, than it is humbling to be without them. We scarce ever avoid Contempt, but we become the object of Envy. The ascendant which Leicester took in the confederacy, set the principal members of it against him. His address and courage were crimes to jealous eyes, and such as they were least disposed to pardon.

These differences roused the indolent monarch. The union of his enemies had as it were degraded him; their division gave him hopes of recovering his authority. Being still King, and once in his life he

was

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was a great King, he immediately summoned a new Parliament to meet at Oxford (others say at London) to put things on the ancient footing. He opened this assembly in the tone and with the air of Master and Sovereign. “ I have called you together, to give
“ you my orders. I have made void the
“ conventions which we had concluded in
“ turbulent times. You had promised me
“ the greatest advantages from them; I have
“ long felt their inconveniences. The dis-
“ turbances have increased in my kingdom
“ from that unhappy day, and my parsi-
“ mony hath no longer any resource. Since
“ I was born king, I will be king. Let every
“ one reassume his rank, I that of master,
“ you that of subjects.

This short speech made the most violent of the confederates and nineteen of the twenty-four commissioners turn royalists. In another nation such a change would have been complete success; it was nothing in England. The daring Leicester, fixed in a party where he imagined glory increased with danger, raising his voice, and addressing himself to the new partisans of the king, said to them with an air of reproach, indignation,

and contempt, "Is it lawful for you to violate
" the solemn oaths you took at Oxford? Heaven,
" which witnessed my promises, shall
" never see me change. I now go to the
" altar, to renew the inviolable obligation."

What the king had spoken was greatly said; Leicester's speech was extravagant, and therefore better suited to the circumstances and temper of the audience: accordingly the effect it had was incredible: it fixed the inconstancy of some, put an end to the uncertainty of others, and brought back those that had gone off the farthest. War seemed unavoidable: on one side the king laboured to recover his authority, on the other, the Barons to support their association. All were in arms. It was every day expected that a decisive action would let England know, whether she was to reckon the prince a tyrant, or the confederates, rebels. The inconstancy of the nation, says an historian, had a very salutary effect at this conjuncture. The best heads of each party so often changed their colours, that, not knowing whom they could depend on, both sides became timid. A war without any engagement, and a negotiation without any peace, took up above
two

two years. Some of the wisest of both parties at last proposed to make the king of France arbiter of the mutual pretensions of the subjects against the Prince, and of the prince against the subjects. Henry agreed to it with readiness, and the Barons with reluctance, being unwilling to take a King for judge in a cause which seemed to be the common cause of all kings.

Louis preferred the glory of judging a nation to the advantage he might have gained by contending with it. Religion, which often heighten'd his courage, always confined his politics. The Confessors of kings, who have since become statesmen, were at that time recluses; and, unhappily for France, the worst-founded scruples were often preferred to the knowledge of the greatest ministers.

After some days had been spent in the examination of the most singular cause that had ever been known, Louis pronounced the sentence which kept England and France, and even all Europe in suspense: By this sentence he annulled the Statutes of Oxford, and yet maintained the privileges of Magna Charta. This judgment, which secured to
every

every one their right, was dictated by the highest Wisdom and Equity. But what terminates differences is rarely relished by rebels. The greatest part found fault with the award. Leicester, more artful, took another course: he pretended, that the Oxford statutes being wholly founded on the great charter, the confederates had gained their cause since by the very award of the King of France magna charta remained in full force. Thus a most judicious and authentic judgment served only to bring back to their duty the more moderate of the Barons, or those who, discontented with the faction itself, sought a pretext for leaving it.

Dispositions so averse to Peace brought on a most bloody War. The king's party prevailed in the beginning. Henry, equally susceptible of presumption and of fear according to the posture of his affairs, resolved to follow his good fortune, and marched directly to the Capital. Leicester advanced to meet him, and both armies came in sight of each other at Lewes in Suffex. Before the quarrel should be carried to a greater height, the austere chief of the confederates tried, as usual, to gain the appearance of justice

tice to his side. To clear himself of the blood which he was going to shed, he wrote a very submissive letter to the King, proposing an accommodation; but, still firm, and consistent with himself, he would not recede from any of his pretensions. His submission was ill received: Henry answered in the style of a haughty master and an irritated Monarch. It was what Leicester expected, accordingly he had prepared for an engagement.

The Royalists were divided into three bodies. Prince Edward commanded the Right, the king of the Romans the Left, and Henry the Center. The earl regulated his disposition by that of his enemy. Edward began the action. He attacked the London militia, broke them, and pursued them with that ardour which youth, courage, and revenge inspire. Leicester, who observed, with all the calmness of a great captain, the faults of his enemies, hastened to take advantage of the Prince's absence by falling upon the other part of their army. The Barons, sensible of the fate that awaited them should the battle go against them, attacked with a fury mixed with despair, the king's troops, who had not the same reasons for fighting with equal animosity:

animosity : they gave way after a short resistance, and left their leader to the discretion of the enemy. The two kings had just surrendered when Edward returned from the pursuit of the corps which he had beaten. Though he perceived that in running after a chimerical victory, he had let slip a real one, he still preserved his courage and his presence of mind. He formed upon the spot the bold design to assault the Conqueror, and did not despair of vanquishing him.

If this resolution could have been executed immediately, it might have succeeded. The conquerors, busy in taking care of the prisoners or pursuing the runaways, could have ill supported a shock for which they were not prepared. But the prince did not find his men animated by the noble despair that filled *his* breast. The time he lost in haranguing them was wisely employed by Leicester in rallying his army. This general, who was fully sensible of the danger of his situation, at first thought only of defending himself. When once he saw his ranks formed, he conceived other hopes. He proposed seizing Prince Edward and making him his prisoner. For this end he sent him proposals, to amuse him, whilst

whilst by several detachments he surrounded him and cut off his retreat. The prince was taken in the snare. He fell into the hands of his enemy, and was obliged to submit beforehand to whatever should be agreed on for the reformation of the state.

Leicester knew to conquer, and to make the most of victory. As soon as he saw the royal family in his power, he resolved to draw from it every advantage that his policy could suggest. He formed a plan of government which he despaired to see authorised by the king, and which he proposed to get approved by the Nation. The calling a parliament was subject to many difficulties. On the one hand, the victorious barons were unwilling that those of the contrary party should be summoned, under pretence that they were in arms against their country. On the other hand, it was apprehended, and not without reason, that a Parliament composed of only part of those who had an apparent right to sit in it, would be looked upon as the act of private persons. To prevent this inconveniency, Leicester made Henry create certain officers, who, under the title of Conservators, appointed in
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the king's name four knights of each shire to sit in the ensuing parliament, as representatives of their respective counties.

From this celebrated æra we must, in my opinion, date the origin of the Parliament of England. Historians are in perpetual contradiction on this important subject, because they have neglected to inform, or to explain themselves. Let us clear up a little what they have obscured: a few words will be sufficient to developé this chaos, which hath always passed for impenetrable. If by the word Parliament we understand the right usurped by the Barons of granting the extraordinary subsidies to the king, its origin will go up as high as the first successors of William the Conqueror. If by the word Parliament we understand only the name, it began at Oxford in 1248. But if by Parliament we understand an Assembly composed of the three bodies of the kingdom, we must fix its origin to the event in 1264 which we are treating of: this is the first time that mention is made of the Commons in the archives of the nation. Now, would the historians, who were so attentive to speak of the superior Clergy
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and Nobility under the generical name of Barons or Lords who held their fiefs immediately of the Crown, have neglected or avoided to mention the third estate if it had had any share in publick affairs? This argument, if I mistake not, may pass for demonstration.

The new Parliament seemed to have been called solely to debase the throne, and justify the rebellion: it implicitly obeyed the dictates of Leicester, which were not those of virtue. This subtle malcontent would have the king's name to every thing, not to support himself, but to make Henry contemptible; and the prisoner king, either from a shameful weakness, or from a vain hope of changing his condition, subscribed all. Leicester issued under the great seal such orders as he thought for the good of the state or his own private interest, these two being almost always confounded together by those who are at the helm. Without being on the throne, this usurper of the royal authority kept the king in irons and the nation under the yoke. There were a thousand guilty, but the leader alone made

made any advantage of their crimes. His accomplices did something more than murmur, they took up arms, and young Gloucester, to whom his birth and abilities gave authority, put himself at their head. Leicester did not march, he flew to these new enemies, followed by his prisoners. Edward, who had received notice of the project formed for setting him at liberty, found means to deceive his guards. One day that he was permitted to take an airing on horseback, he went beyond the bounds prescribed to him, and rode away with so much swiftness, that his guards could not prevent his joining a troop of horse which waited for him. No sooner had the Prince taken the commandment of Gloucester's army, than they came from all quarters to join his standard. The revolution was sudden. Several important places acknowledged the heir of the crown, who proud of so much success, would try the fate of a battle. Leicester, notwithstanding all his skill, was forced to accept it; and, notwithstanding his bravery, lost it, together with his life, because he was not seconded.

Thus did the founder of the English Parliament, end his career, one of the most extraordinary

ordinary men, and, if I may venture to say it, one of the greatest men that ever appeared on the theatre of the world. Never perhaps was a good Patriot so much extolled, never a rebel so much blamed ; and yet, perhaps, he was neither the one nor the other sufficiently. The court rejoiced at his death, and the city was afflicted. He was treated by the one as a Villain, and honoured by the other as a Martyr. One side poured contempt on his memory, the other visited his tomb, and ascribed miracles to it. Strange effect of prejudice, which decides so differently of the salvation and reputation of men.

The fall of the Leader of the rebellion, or the English Catiline, established the throne of the lawful king. Henry ended in peace a reign too long, which he had passed in the midst of storms. We must go back to this weak and unhappy Prince, to find the source of the rivers of blood which have since overflowed England. He left the seeds of an eternal discord to his successors, by giving the great Charter an authority which has scarcely been any more questioned, and by suffering the Parliament to be established, which hath ever since subsisted.

F O U R T H E P O C H.

The deputies of the Commons, who were chosen by the King, begin to be chosen by their cities and counties, in the reign of Edward I. A. D. 1272.

N O sooner had Edward restored the King his father to the throne, and secured the publick tranquillity, than he went to seek employment, for his valour or his inquietude in Palestine. For more than a century Asia was become the school or the grave of all the bravo's of Europe. A recluse pilgrim, who concealed a great soul under a rough outside, had formed the grand design of wresting the Holy Land from the Infidels; and the greatest men in Christendom had undertaken the execution of it: such were Robert duke of Normandy, more than man in combat, less than man in conduct; Stephen of Blois, a prince of great wit and little courage; Robert earl of Flanders, the greatest partisan, and the most trifling general in the world; Hugh
count

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count of Vermandois, in the council timid, in the army rash; Bohemond Prince of Tarentum, as proper to give battle, as another to charge a party; Raimond count of Toulouse, a great warrior, a greater statesman; and Godefroy of Bouillon, who with every talent possessed every virtue.

These first heroes of the Croisades, by their union and their valour, made the most rapid conquests, which by the vices opposite to those virtues their immediate successors lost. St. Bernard, whose fiery and restless temper led him to what was great and uncommon, preached up a new croisade to remedy these misfortunes; but he found a powerful opponent in Suger abbot of St. Denis, who governed France. Both these men possessed great celebrity and merit. The first had more brilliant talents, the second more solid ones. The one was headstrong and inflexible; the firmness of the other had its limits. The Hermit had particularly at heart the advantages of Religion, the Minister the good of the State. S. Bernard had the air, and authority of a person inspired; Suger the sentiments and behaviour of a man of good sense.

A wise man stands no chance with the multitude against an enthusiast. The declamations of the one prevailed more than the views of the other ; and zeal triumphed over policy. The consequences of this enterprise, equally shameful and fatal, convinced the whole universe, that a statesman sees farther into futurity, than a pretended prophet. The affairs of the eastern christians declined ever after. St. Louis, in hopes of re-establishing them, exposed his dominions to invasions, his people to ruin, and his life to the greatest dangers ; and Prince Edward was sharing the ungrateful labours of this unhappy expedition, when the death of the king his father recalled him to Europe and placed him on the throne.

This Prince on his arrival found in his dominions a tranquillity and order, which would have been surprising any where, but in England were miraculous. What they had formerly experienced of his conduct and valour, and what Fame had published of his moderation and firmness, made his good subjects impatient to see him, and the malcontents fearful of offending him. To avoid the evils inseparable from anarchy
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Provision had been made for the government of the state till his arrival. A moderate parliament, zealous to establish and maintain good order (such perhaps as England hath never since seen) had taken the wisest measures to insure the publick tranquillity. A remarkable innovation made this assembly famous. From the time that the People had begun to take part in the administration of publick affairs, the choice of their deputies had been without contradiction in the power of the King. Edward's absence introduced a new custom. The cities and counties elected their own representatives, who, according to the rule, ought to have been chosen by the regents of the kingdom. The Parliament received them; and the Commons have enjoyed this privilege ever since.

An usurpation so injurious to the royal authority chagrined the new king; but, to avoid shewing his displeasure, or not to make himself contemptible, he seemed not to perceive it, or not to be offended at it. This wise Prince put off to another season the care of restraining his Parliament within its proper bounds, or of confining it, if possible, within narrower. A long and thorough

study of the character of the nation had taught him, that to subject it, he must first gain its confidence by conferring favours, or its esteem by effecting prodigies. An open and obliging behaviour, even to the authors or ring-leaders of the late troubles, brought over those who had till then slighted his authority ; and exploits, which to the eclat of Heroism joined the advantage of being useful, made Edward quite the idol of England.

Lewellin, prince of Wales, was the first victim which the king immolated to the tranquillity of his people. The Welsh, the unfortunate remains of the ancient Britons, had had long struggled with success against the Conquerors that had subjected England. The horror of the rocks which were become their azylum, and the excess of their misery, had inspired them with an indifference for life that made them masters of the days of their enemies. Sometimes victorious, and sometimes vanquished, but always in arms, always ready to engage, every drop of blood in their veins cried out for vengeance on the usurpers of their island. Means were found to defeat, but never to subdue them. England exacted no tribute from them ; she contented herself with a homage ;

mage; but the Welsh preferred death to this mark of slavery. If their chief sometimes promised it, the people always disavowed it. The fury of civil wars gives but an imperfect idea of the inveterate animosity of these two nations. The proud Lewellin, to the hereditary hatred of his family and his country, added a sovereign contempt of the English. A spectator and often an actor in the strange scenes that distracted that nation in the reign of Henry III. he did not find a Man among them except the rebel Leicester, and he had been his friend. But England had changed her master, and the new Sovereign his plan and behaviour. Edward supported his pretensions by the sword. With one hand he demanded the Welshman's homage, with the other he offered him war.

Lewellin consulted his heart, and not his strength. If his answer was at first equivocal, his behaviour quickly explained it. He was the first in arms, but did not long hold the rank of conqueror. This Prince had only courage, firmness, and greatness of soul; the English Monarch added to these advantages a powerful army, and a numerous fleet. Invested by sea and land the proud Welshman

submitted; but his hatred grew more inveterate than ever. Scarce had the conqueror regained his own territories when the combustion became general in the principality of Wales. Edward, accustomed by his victories to think himself invincible, immediately sent his best generals to quench it. He learnt by the event that fortune was attached to his person. His lieutenants were beat. He went thither in person. The indignation which he had shewn against such of his troops as had been repulsed, was dissipated by what he found himself. If he did not go so far as to fear his enemy, he could not help esteeming him. The despair of the Welsh balanced for a considerable time his experience and his forces. It was doubtful which of the two parties Victory would declare for, when the death of Lewellin, who fell like a Hero and in battle, changed the face of the war.

He was succeeded by his brother prince David, whose hatred to the English was as great, and his talents perhaps equal, but his authority much less. The different bodies of the Welsh, hitherto animated by the same spirit, now began to act according to their private views. Edward, who maintained

tained a perfect harmony in his army, quickly gained a visible ascendancy over troops so ill united. He made himself master of their fortresses, into which he put garrisons; of their lands, which he distributed to the conquerors; and of their principality, which he united to his crown, and of which he made his successor bear the name. These prudent arrangements had been preceded by an event which facilitated their execution. David had been made prisoner and carried to London, where he lost his life on a scaffold; and the head of his brother Lewellin was publickly exposed like that of a rebel. History has decided that English Heroes, no more than English writers, know to do honour to virtue in their enemies. The infamy of this treatment fell entirely on the author of it. Edward must have had very little innate generosity, to shew none on an occasion where it could be attended only with glory and not the least danger. Heroick tears would have honoured the ashes of his enemies, and his victory; this barbarity heightened their glory, and tarnished his own.

The noise which such a cruel proceeding made in Europe was lost in more considerable

able events. Scarce had the English monarch finished this tragedy, when he formed the plan of another, which was to be much more bloody. The death of Alexander III. king of Scotland, left his crown a prey to the ambition of twelve competitors. To save their country from the horror of a civil war, they agreed to submit their differences to an arbiter ; and Edward was pitched on because his power and his situation enabled him to support the sentence he should pronounce. That wise Prince resolved to take advantage of this circumstance to secure to England the homage of Scotland, so often insisted on as an incontestable right, and always refused as an unjust pretension. The Scots haughtily rejected these proposals : they were more favourably received by the candidates, each of whom wanted to make a merit of his submission, with his judge. Of these twelve cowards, only one could reap any benefit from his meanness, which was Baliol. He was preferred, say the English historians, because his claim was best founded ; and, according to the Scots, because he was least qualified to support the rights of his crown against the usurpations of Edward.

The

The new king, on his ascending the throne, acted at first like a weak Prince; the reproaches or the contempt of his subjects accustomed him insensibly to think greatly. If he had not the courage to refuse a first homage, he had not the meanness to pay a second. But he felt, to his confusion, that it is not so easy to repair a fault as to commit one. However well prepared that prince ought to have been for humiliations, he could not support the weight of the chains he was loaded with. He publicly renounced the fidelity he had sworn. Edward, more irritated than became a great prince, abandoned Guienne to the victorious arms of France, that he might reduce the Scots, and take possession, by right of conquest, of what he was otherwise like to lose. Berwick was the first place he laid siege to. He met with a resistance which he did not expect, and which he despaired of surmounting but by stratagem. He pretended to raise the siege, and made his emissaries give out it was for fear of the succours that were coming to the town. When he was at a sufficient distance not to be discovered, he put up Scots colours, and advanced boldly to the place, with the confidence of a prince who comes
to

to relieve his subjects. The garrison, seduced by this stratagem, hastened to meet their deliverer. They were scarce got out, when they were cut off by the English, who entering precipitately into the town, presented a frightful spectacle of the most cruel vengeance. From thence Edward marched to Dunbar. He met the enemy on his march and attacked them. The valour of the English, or, according to others, the treachery of some of her subjects, rendered this battle fatal to Scotland. From a rival she became a captive of England: her king was taken prisoner, confined in the Tower of London, and forced to renounce his right to the crown in favour of the Conqueror.

From this time the Scots began to be regarded as subjects of the English. Edward made himself master of all the fortresses he had occasion for, made sure of all the nobility whom he suspected, and changed the laws that thwarted his views. He did not cause himself to be crowned king of Scotland, because he wanted to make that fine state a province of England. Such a rigorous treatment kindled in the breasts of the Scots a resentment which some centuries have not been able

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able to extinguish. To have a better title to hate their tyrants, they stifled complaints which perhaps would have been harken'd to, and chose rather to continue unhappy, than to owe the redress or end of their calamities to the compassion of Edward. Such generous sentiments made a young gentleman named William Wallace, conceive that the liberty of Scotland was not irretrievably lost, and that this was a proper time to think of recovering it.

Wallace had an agreeable and majestick countenance, was very tall and well-built, and could support the extremes of grief and hunger. He had a mind extensive and just, a heart desirous of dangers and of glory; a temper fit to gain partisans, and to keep them; the talent of haranguing and persuading to a great degree; the science and a taste for combats; a genius proper for conducting an affair, and extricating himself out of it; the art of supporting with chearfulness, and of softening to others, the greatest misfortunes; a constancy which received new strength from what made the most resolute, despair; and a disinterestedness, which his rivals, and even his enemies would have

have been ashamed to suspect. It is very possible however, that ambition aided him to support his enterprize ; but it is certain that love of his Country alone made him engage in it.

The Standard of Liberty set up by such an able hand, soon assembled a considerable body. Heroes create, or develop other Heroes. All who felt in them any bent or talent for great things, resorted to Wallace. His first success facilitated new advantages by augmenting the confidence of his companions, and procuring others. His care to commit no mistakes himself, and to take advantage of those of his enemies, gained him a superiority which astonished both parties. He soon became like a torrent, which the banks thrown up to oppose it, make only more impetuous. In a little time Scotland saw itself purged of its tyrants, and conferred on its deliverer the quality of regent of the kingdom. High titles, which to most men are the term of their labours, were only the commencement of those of Wallace. No sooner had he delivered his country, than he set about revenging it : he advanced his victorious colours

lours even into England, and on the road to London.

Edward had not waited for these extremities, to assemble his forces. He led them himself against Wallace, who had, besides, the jealousy of the nobility of that kingdom to combat with. This great man was in their eyes guilty of the highest crime; he had done what they ought to have done. To stop his course, or deprive him of the honour of his victories, these false patriots obliged him to share with two of them the command of the army. The English monarch, informed by his spies of these feuds, without hesitating any longer, attacked the Scots, whose approach, probably, without this incident, he would have dreaded. It is telling the fate of the battle, to mention the disposition of the armies. The Scots, not knowing whom to obey, were cut to pieces. Wallace, though vanquished, had all the honour of the day. He had shewn in the heat of the action all the valour of a foldier; he made a retreat worthy of a great Captain. Even in his defeat he was formidable to his enemies, and exposed to the malice of those who envied him. To appease them, and
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to make their Country dear to them, he resigned the command. After having governed the State with glory, he modestly returned to the rank of a subject. Some will have it, that it was because he despaired of the republick; it is plain that it was to restore it. He sacrificed his elevation to the public good.

Wallace had no longer the authority which great places give; he had only the consideration which follows heroick merit. The knowledge of his generous sentiments kept or drew about him all the Scots who chose rather to die free, than live slaves. With this troop of friends superiour to menaces and especially to careffes, the intrepid Outlaw more than once made England tremble. The fortune of Scotland varied according to the courage and abilities of the new regents. Wallace was always invincible. Treachery at length accomplished what hatred, boldness, and strength could not. He was sold to the English, who, still uniform in their proceedings, cowardly put to death, as a traitor, a true Scotsman, who would not acknowledge Edward for master. The ignominious punishment which he suffered, did not degrade him from the rank of the
greatest

greatest Heroes. A man always dies gloriously, when he dies for his Country.

The king of England did not reap from Wallace's death all the fruit he expected. The Scots, it is true, bore the yoke for some time pretty patiently; but the English were not become more tractable, perhaps because the losses in France balanced the successes in Scotland. Edward made captives, without ceasing to be one himself; he was a Conqueror, and was not yet king. We have seen that this prince, on ascending the throne, had winked at some usurpations of the Commons in his absence. When he thought himself sufficiently beloved, or sufficiently feared, he wanted to wipe away the stains, which his two last predecessors, and his own complaisance at first, had cast on the throne. He began to govern without a parliament, and giving himself no trouble about the privileges of the great Charter, levied extraordinary subsidies.

Before taking this great step, the English Monarch ought to have carefully examined whether it suited his temper and circumstances. When once engaged, he ought to have struggled against every obstacle which

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the proud pretensions and haughty spirit of his People made him expect in the execution of it. But most men, even great men, do not know to be bold but by halves. Edward, who had not courage of mind, which is infinitely more rare and more valuable than that of the heart, wanted resolution on the first occasion that he met with any resistance. He was afraid of losing all by his firmness; and did not perceive the consequences, still more fatal, of his weakness. The nation, which trembled at first, began to make itself feared. The bishops, barons, and commons united their voices, their grievances, and their remonstrances.

To appease them the Prince convened a Parliament, wherein he himself confirmed the commons in their usurpation. He gave orders to all the sheriffs of England, that each county or province should send to Parliament two knights, each city two citizens, each borough two burgessees, to approve and consent to what the barons and peers of the kingdom should think fit to resolve on. It is manifest by these expressions, were there no other evidence, that the commons had
not

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not a deliberative, but only a representative voice. In the authentic acts of all the parliaments called in this reign, the deputies of this house never speak to the Monarch but as suppliants. They represent to him the grievances of the nation, and pray him to redress them by the advice of the Lords spiritual and temporal. All the acts are conceived in these terms: "Granted by the king, and the lords spiritual and temporal, to the prayers and supplications of the commons." In all probability the little authority which the commons had in parliament, made Edward imagine that the Sovereign incurred no danger by divesting himself of the right of appointing them. The issue ought to have undeceived him. He was quickly made sensible, that it was more consistent with safety and dignity to nominate the deputies, than to receive them. The multitude, which hitherto had generally supported the king against the barons, began to form pretensions, and wanted to have separate privileges, of their own. The commotions which attended the election of the deputies in the provinces, awaken'd the ideas of rebellion which had been

ill extinguish'd. The people, who in England have as strong a propension to Liberty, as perhaps in other countries to Slavery, became ambitious, insolent, and turbulent. Though they had not the right of suffrage, they often dictated laws to the monarch, and regulated the resolutions of the ministers. This important change was not the work of several ages. The English may be said to be the most phlegmatic and at the same time the most brisk People in Europe. The short interval between two Parliaments sufficed for this dangerous ferment. Edward reigned long enough to be a witness, and in one sense the victim of this caprice. He saw himself forced to disavow the attempts he had made on the privileges or usurpations of the nation, and to make no future incroachment. His declaration was sent all over the nation, and registered in every court of the kingdom.

A king always thinks the engagements into which he enters with his subjects, humbling and hard; Edward thought them insupportable. In falsely-enlightened times the respectable obligations of Religion are counted as nothing. In those barbarous
ages

ages they looked on themselves as freed from oaths made to the Almighty, by a dispensation from a man. The English monarch, to break his engagements, applied as usual to the holy See. Clement V. in ascending the throne, had no ambition to decorate the list of great princes and holy pontiffs. Indifferent to what was either just or great, he had no attachment but to what was profitable. Edward sent him a part of the wealth of his dominions; and Clement, on his part, opened the treasures of the Church. The king was permitted to recover as much as he could of the authority usurped by his subjects. Death destroyed all his views.

Historians of different nations have spoke so variously of this famous Prince, that it is difficult to form a just idea of him. The Scots have written Satires; the English made eulogiums. I am not afraid of advancing, that neither have known him sufficiently, and I make bold to appeal to the judgment of every one, who does not read history purely to find dates. Edward had not what we call principles, and a fixed character. His virtues and his vices depended a little

too much on incidents. He was cruel, though brave; moderate, though victorious; revengeful, though benevolent. His knowledge was confined, his successes brilliant, his courage extraordinary, his manners pure even to austerity; his equity exact even to rigour, his friendship generous even to heroism. Rash with regard to enemies that he despised, he was irrefolute with those whom he thought his equals; and too readily believed that he might be equalled. His reign was in every sense *his* reign, for he had no minister nor favourite; which History remarks of few other Princes.



F I F T H E P O C H.

The Parliament usurps the legislative authority under Edward II. A. D.

1308.

THE Power of making laws has been in all ages, and among every people, the distinguishing mark of sovereign authority. Since William the Conqueror had subjected the English, all the kings his successors had enjoyed this supreme right. The different factions, which so long shook the state, never attacked this glorious prerogative. History hath preserved the laws enacted by Edward I. in his parliament. He ascribes to himself alone the legislative power, and his Edicts run thus: *Our sovereign Lord the King hath provided and established the following acts.*

The weakness of Edward II. his son and successor, inspired his people with ambition, or at least made that which they cherished, shew itself. This young prince distinguished his accession to the throne by a shameful and unhappy action, which procured him the lasting hatred of his subjects, and determined all the events of his reign.

Edward from his very childhood had raised an outcry against himself by an uncommon fondness for his favourites, of whom public report would have it, that he made mistresses. As the fatal consequences of such sort of engagements are always dreaded, the minions were removed; and it was assured in the strongest terms that they were removed for ever. The will of the Dead is seldom regarded as orders to the Living. Edward did not wait till his Father's corpse was put in the ground, before he violated his oaths and disturbed the publick peace. Gaveston, the very man who had served most to corrupt his manners, was recalled with honour, and nothing omitted to make him entirely forget his disgrace.

Gaveston, with the graces of an aimable woman possessed the talents of a great man. He had a very handsome person, and uncommon strength, a taste for trifles, and ambition; a fondness for dress, and a thirst for glory; a tender heart, and an heroic mind; an agreeable wit, and extensive knowledge. With the virtues of the two sexes he had also their defects: he was effeminate and indefatigable; galant and terrible; insinuating and forward; polite

polite and insolent. He carried to extreme the three characters which centered in him, the pride of a Gascon, the capriciousness of a favourite, and the insensibility of a Minister.

Men, or, if you will, women of this stamp never light up moderate passions. Edward made Gaveston the soul of all his pleasures, the dispenser of all his favours, the companion of all his honours, the depositary of all his power. Slave even on the throne, the English monarch was wholly taken up with the care of pleasing his lover, or the happiness of possessing him. He received homage, only to give it to him whom he loved. Unable to cede the crown to him, he brought him near it by nominating him viceroy of all his dominions. Edward had only the name of king, Gaveston had the authority.

A wise man, to disarm Envy, would have tempered the lustre of his favour and fortune; the haughty favourite disgusted the nobility by proudly triumphing in his. They found Edward inconsiderate, and Gaveston vain. They blamed in the one his easiness to give, and in the other his greediness to take. The
first

first revolted them by his blind confidence, and the second by infamous treacheries. They hated Edward because he slighted them, and Gaveston because he insulted them. They were equally astonished, at the Prince, that he did not see the precipice he was digging for himself; and at the Favourite, that he was not afraid of it.

The Nobility, however, did not break out at first. They waited till Edward should have quite debased himself, Gaveston quite forgot himself, and the People be quite disgusted. Then they carried their complaints to parliament, which supported them with all its power. The king saw himself forced to sacrifice his Favourite to the clamours of the Publick. Gaveston was sent to Ireland with every mark of favour and every title of honour, that could soften his disgrace. This banishment was short, because the king's passion for him still remained; it again became necessary, because Gaveston abated nothing of his insolence, but rather increased it by an alliance of his family with the royal blood.

The new storm, which destroyed the favourite, was formed with great noise by the too celebrated Earl of Lancaster. This Nobleman

bleman partook of all; of the throne, by his descent; of the royal power, by his dignities; of virtue by the appearance of it; of the Great by his ambition; his friends he attached to him by services; the multitude by largesses, the soldiers by his valour, the parliament by his eloquence. His bare name assembled all England to his standard. Every one was convinced that the party which he join'd was the party of humanity, justice, and religion. The king and the favourite saw the storm gathering, without being frightened. Their firmness did not proceed from their courage, but from their indolence. Not to interrupt their shameful pleasures they hid from themselves the danger that threatened them. This security cost Gaveston his head, and Edward his authority; the one was put to death, the other degraded.

Perhaps I may be mistaken, but it seems to me, the English have always laboured to render their kings contemptible, that they might have a right to despise them. They are as much afraid of a good prince, as other nations are of a tyrant, and have laid it down as a maxim, that their Liberty, that idol to which they have sacrificed so much blood, can
who

never be in danger, but under a monarch who shall force them to esteem and love him. Whatever may be in this reflexion, the malcontents waited not for the time I speak of, to invade the rights of the crown. The weak Edward had not got to the throne, but by swearing *that he would keep, and cause to be kept, the laws and statutes which the Parliament should think fit to enact.* This oath made the most fatal breach in the royal authority. Lancaster, who was not far removed from the throne, ought to have profited himself of the ascendant he had in the confederacy, to make void this engagement: he caused it to be solemnly renewed. More eager for popular favour, than the distant hope of reigning, this enthusiastic Republican stript his family for ever of the supreme power. Since that time the legislative authority hath no longer belonged to the King, but to his Parliament. To make laws or annul them, there must necessarily be a concurrence of the two powers. It is therefore in the reunion of the two powers that the sovereign authority resides.

In order to give some stability to the different arrangements taken with the king, the great men, who at this time began to be styled My Lords, obliged him by their intrigues

trigues to receive from them a Chamberlain, whom they believed inviolably devoted to the League, and of a proper character to form a perfect spy at court. Hugh Spenfer had a father, a person of an extensive genius and intrepid heart, who had only appeared a great captain, and was at the same time a most artful courtier : interest had made him a Republican, a higher interest made him a royalist. This ambitious man wanted to make his son act a higher part than was intended for him. He persuaded him to sacrifice the interests of the Barons to his own, and to labour to become the master of those who looked on themselves as his protectors. A handsome and graceful person, singular and depraved manners, an insinuating and submissive temper, a chearful and lively wit, and an unbounded complaisance at all seasons and in all things, gave the young Spenfer great influence over the heart of Edward: he reigned in it. In the ardour of this new love, every thing was permitted to the son and the father, who, like all the favourites that preceded, and have come after them, kept no measures in their pride, their ambition, and their revenge. The publick indignation removed

ved them for some time from the court and even from the kingdom ; but the king's favour, which never changed, recalled them on the following occasion.

The Queen, by an unaccountable religious caprice, which was not in her temper, would make a pilgrimage to Canterbury. The castle of Ledes being in her way, she wanted to pass a night there. As the place belonged to one of the authors of the late troubles, and a mutual confidence was not yet established, she was denied entrance pretty rudely. The princess, naturally haughty and revengeful, forgot that she was on a journey of devotion, to think only of the indignity offered her. A man may sometimes defer his vengeance, but that of a woman can suffer no delay. Isabel broke out on this occasion in a manner of which only one of her sex is capable. To move the English there must be a spectacle ; and the multitude were melted by her complaints. The king himself, all indolent all he was, bestirred as much in revenging the princess, as if he had loved her. He immediately raised some forces. To make his subjects easy, who began to be alarmed

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at these motions, the king published a solemn declaration, that he did not arm to make war on his people, but only to punish the insolence of a private person. This proclamation kept all quiet. Edward saw himself at liberty to make what use of his army he should think proper. The castle of Ledes was besieged, taken, and razed. This success, if it may be called by that name, puffed up his courage. He had taken arms only to pacify the queen; he bethought himself to make use of them to take vengeance on his enemies, and restore to the crown all its lustre.

Amidst these transactions the Monarch recalled the Spensers, to have the assistance of their advice in his council, and of their bravery in his armies. This act of authority, made with an air of prudence and dignity which Edward had not hitherto discovered in his enterprises, persuaded the bulk of the nation, that he found himself in a condition to be king, and that it was time they should resume the modest rank of subjects. The idea they conceived that the king was powerful, made him at length formidable. The People, who had thought the party of the
Barons

Barons most just because most powerful, now sided with the king for the same reason. The more timid or more wise of the confederate lords also returned to their obedience; but were received with a haughtiness which persuaded them, that the king would have been better pleased to owe their submission to the force of his arms, than to a cowardly and selfish repentance.

The earl of Lancaster, that everlasting head of all the leagues, saw with uneasiness his faction weakened by continual desertions. For the first time in his life he was reduced to the humbling mortification of flying before a king and favourites whom he had hitherto treated with the highest contempt. Victory always gives wings to the meanest soldier; a defeat often clips those of the most intrepid. The royal army came up with the confederates, and attacked them. The rebels were too few to conquer; they could only die, and they did it with courage. Lancaster, too criminal to merit such a glorious end, sought death, and found only slavery.

There were only two parties to take with that formidable rebel and about four-score

score lords who were made prisoners with him; that of justice, or that of clemency. The King, by the laws, could either punish or pardon them. It seemed dangerous to spill so much noble blood; that spectacle of horror might rather revolt, than intimidate, and instead of making authority be respected, make it be detested as tyranny. On the other hand, the Confederates hath hitherto appeared too jealous of their independency, to count upon their submission. The generosity of a pardon, in humbling them, would naturally embitter them against the court, and render them irreconcilable. To put the prisoners to death, was driving their friends to extremities; to set them at liberty, was to arm themselves. The one was more safe, but the other seemed more noble.

It was too great a difficulty for Edward to solve. His weakness inclined him to mercy; by his weakness, they made him cruel. The favourites persuaded him that he could not confirm his authority but by the death of the malcontents, and he signed the warrant. Lancaster was executed at Pomfret, and twenty-two lords in different places, to strike a terror into the whole kingdom.

This deluge of the best blood of England filled all hearts with dread. They were not only afraid to act, they durst not speak. The time seemed to be come for restoring the rights of the crown, and depriving the parliament of the legislative power, of which it ought to be the less tenacious, that it had not yet made use of it. The Spensers unhappily mistook their party: they would have secured themselves in favour by establishing the royal authority; they ruined both by pursuing their private revenge. The thunder broke at first on the three principal authors of their banishment, who were concerned in the late troubles; Orleton bishop of Hereford, the bishop of Lincoln, and Mortimer the younger. In those times of ignorance, to devote one's self to the service of the altar, was to secure impunity for the greatest outrages against the throne. The Clergy demanded the release of the two Prelates, and Mortimer evaded the fury of the Favourites by a very singular adventure which shall be related in the course of this history. A common danger, and a common interest united these three men, who now became famous. This triumvirate aimed a terrible blow at the publick

publick tranquillity. The first seemed to be born to overturn the world, the second to govern it, the third to conquer it. The one had all the activity necessary to form a party; the other the wisdom necessary to conduct it; the last sufficient boldness to put it in action. The league had resources, union, and power; it wanted authority; which Isabella gave it.

This Princess, incensed that she was neither Queen nor wife, and quite wearied with the coldness of the king and the contempt of the Favourites, sought relief from her troubles in a strict correspondence with the malcontents. The union was quickly formed, and a perfect confidence established between them. The ruin of the Spencers, and perhaps of Edward, was solemnly sworn: men bred up in intrigue formed the enterprise, but they wanted hands to execute it, and the whole nation was so much dispirited, they despaired of finding any.

Such was the situation of affairs when those divisions between England and France, which began with the two monarchies, and which, probably, will only end with them, sprang up. The Malcontents, attentive to

every thing, discovered in those feuds some circumstances which they could turn to their advantage. They traversed, underhand and with success, the negotiations set on foot for terminating the differences, and artfully insinuated to the ministry, that none but the Queen was so much beloved, or had so much address, to soften the mind of Charles le Bel, which was but too much rankled. The Spencers gave headlong into the snare. Isabella was intreated to go over sea to restore harmony between two nations which were so dear to her, and to reunite two princes, of whom one was her brother and the other her husband.

This Princess, hitherto unknown but by her misfortunes, acted a part at the court of France which in the beginning ravished every one, afterwards astonished them, and in the end terrified the universe. In a few days she terminated the affair between the two Crowns apparently to their advantage, but at bottom relative to her own interests alone. By this treaty Charles restored to the king of England all that he had taken from him, on condition that this Prince should come and do homage in person for Guienne, or make a cession of
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that dutchy to his son Edward, who should do the homage. This alternative was an artifice of the Queen, either to give her friends an opportunity to overturn England, if the king went out of the island, or to strengthen her party on the continent if the person of the Prince her son were in her power. Edward's council was divided in an affair of this importance. The friends of their country and the enemies of the Spencers wanted that the king should keep his estates and pay the homage; the Favourites and their creatures, who neither believed themselves safe to accompany their master to France, nor to stay in England without him, were of a different opinion, and it prevailed. The young prince, aged about thirteen, was sent to France, where his arrival was the seal of the peace between the two nations.

This peace having been proclaimed, and the reconciliation appearing to be sincere, Edward imagined there was no occasion for the queen his wife and the prince of Wales to stay longer at the court of France, and sent them orders to return. Isabella was detained at Paris by ties that were too strong for the

wheels they put in motion to bring her away. Two powerful passions, love and hatred, reigned in her heart. She carried on at once an amorous and political intrigue, and was found to have equal talents and inclination for both. Mortimer, whom we have seen rescued from the hatred of the Spenfers, owed his life to the queen, of whose tenderness he had long been the object. Her love had made her so eloquent in his behalf, that she carried it, with the king, against the Favourites. But in saving his life, the queen could not procure his liberty. Love suggested so many stratagems to the prisoner, that he deceived the vigilance of his enemies, made his escape and went to join the queen in France, where they indemnified one another, without interruption, for the uneasiness that a forced separation had given them.

Their amour, however, did not retard their preparations for revenge. They determined not to return to England till they were in a condition to depress their enemies, and the Prince of Wales was in the plot. The king of France, seduced by the caresses
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and tears of a handsome sister, espoused their resentment. He did not, indeed, take her part publickly, but did her greater service underhand, than by appearing openly for her, which would have been perhaps of little use, and certainly very indecent. A beautiful woman, who has the disposal of large sums, never wants partisans in any country. The princess had no trouble in finding Bravo's to accompany her, she was only at a loss which of them to choose.

The noise of Isabella's amours and designs soon reached London. The English monarch thought the honour and safety of the throne equally struck at. He demanded back his wife with a passion and haughtiness which greatly offended Charles: but the Spensers, more artful, gained by their profusions all who had credit with the French king. From this time the ministry represented the support given a wife who was an open rebel, as a crime against the State, and the clergy represented the indulgence shewn to her irregularities, as a sin against Heaven. These two cabals uniting their arguments and their forces, Charles perceived the necessity of abandoning Isabella: it is even

pretended that he was determined to arrest her and her son, in order to send them back to the king of England.

The princess, apprized of what was carrying on, retired hastily, and ill attended, into Hainault, where she was received with uncommon honours. John of Hainault, brother to the sovereign of the province, valued himself on having all the valour and generosity of the Knights-errant. He assembled 300 gentlemen, and with them undertook to carry back Isabella to England, whom he looked upon as a perfect beauty, and whose adventures had made a noise. After their example, all the youth of the court of Hainault piqued themselves on their compassion and bravery, and the Queen crossed the sea with about 3000 of these illustrious adventurers. At her arrival the greatest part of the English lords joined her with their forces. Edward, plunged in that uncertainty which prevailed in every action of his life, saw himself reduced to fly without knowing where, and without being able to fix in any place but what was filled with wavering friends or declared enemies. Not knowing what part to take, nor his
ministers

ministers what counsel to give him, he retired with his favourite into Wales, and the old Spenser threw himself into Bristol, to cover the king's flight, and retard the progress of the Malcontents. This town stopt the Queen's army but a few days, and the death of its defender did not satisfy her repentment. She followed her good fortune, which quickly delivered to her the favourite, whom she put to death, and his master, whom she confined.

On some occasions it is as embarrassing to succeed, as to miscarry; and Isabella found herself in those circumstances. To put the king to death, or to restore him, she had only one of these two to do. The one would put her life in danger, and the other would blast her glory. I would fain believe, for the honour of Humanity, that the Queen balanced some time between her duty and safety; it is all that the sequel of the history permits us to think most generous in her character. The Parliament, which she assembled, and all whose motions she directed, deposed the prisoner king and raised his son to the throne. The Queen, on this news, acted, to great perfection, the part of
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one deeply afflicted, and all England sought lenitives for a grief of which they were well persuaded she felt nothing. The prince of Wales, whose youth made him less suspicious, was perhaps the only person touched with her counterfeit tears. He was so melted by them, that he solemnly vowed not to accept the crown during the king his father's life, without his express consent. This resolution disconcerted the parliament, and undoubtedly occasioned the motion made by some moderate men, to engage the king to cede, by a voluntary demission, a sceptre which he could no longer bear.

Edward had been a slave on the throne ; he continued one in confinement. He ended, as he had begun, a coward. The crown passed, with his consent, on a more successful head, which was more worthy to wear it. On this condition, he was suffered to live ; an useless favour, or outrage ; the fear of some revolution made them hasten his death. The Queen regent and her lover and minister Mortimer were accused of this execrable deed. The new king believed it the more readily that he detested both, for their pride and tyranny. He went himself
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to take the favourite from the Queen's bed, and put him to death. Isabella was confined ; her days were prolonged : Justice would have permitted the King to take away her life, but Nature forbid the son.

Such were the horrors which terminated the tumultuous and unhappy reign of Edward II. It was a proof that tragical catastrophes are more common under a king without abilities, than under a tyrant without humanity. He may be regarded as the destroyer of the English Monarchy. By dividing the authority of the laws with his Parliament he left in the nation the seeds of civil wars which torrents of blood have not been able to extinguish. This prince was the first victim of his own imprudence, and the History of England, which is chiefly a frightful list of the greatest evils, perhaps contains no misfortunes that can be compared with his.



S I X T H E P O C H.

*The Commons usurp the legislative power in the reign of Edward IV.
A. D. 1461.*

IF the art of Reigning is only the securing the happiness of the People, and the dignity, authority, and quiet of the Sovereign, it may be said that Edward III. whom the English give for one of the greatest princes that ever held the sceptre, was not a great King, taking that title in its full extent. This monarch, by the deposing his father, shortened his way to the throne; which he afterwards embellished by his exploits; and in fine dishonoured by his ridiculous and superannuated amours. His rising was criminal, his noon heroic, his setting unhappy. He did great things, and his admirers pretend that he did them from motives still greater. To hear them, his greatness of soul was without ambition, his courage without rashness, his authority without precipitation, his justice without cruelty, his vivacity without imprudence, his discipline without rigour,

gour, his resentment without revenge, his power without haughtiness. The English generally say so much ill of their kings, that we might easily excuse their heightening the eulogium of this prince if their love to him proceeded from some more just and generous motive than his successes and hatred against France.

After all, Edward might possibly have proved a very excellent Monarch on another throne; but that of England is exposed to so many storms and so slippery, it is more difficult to fill than that of most other nations. This prince seemed to be ignorant of the interests of his crown, or afraid of the genius of his subjects. He wanted either knowledge or firmness. The breaches made in the royal authority under a despised monarch ought to have been built up by an admired Prince, before time had made the repairing them impracticable. To succeed therein, I own, he must have exposed himself to some murmurings, and run perhaps some risques; but has one a right to the title of Great, when he is discouraged by such obstacles?

To avoid a trifling danger, Edward plunged his successors in the greatest: he had
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only courage to conquer his enemies; he wanted it to force his subjects to become happy. If he made the happiness of the generation which he governed, it was at the expence of succeeding ones. Destitute of general views, and carried away by the stream of circumstances, this prince did not extend his foresight farther than his reign. He appeared to make war rather from inquietude than ambition. He made all the credit which he had in his parliament subservient to his conquests; whereas he ought to have made his conquests serve to render him master of his parliament, and to confine it within proper bounds. A desire of being beloved, and little private interests, which are the ruin of affairs of state, made him neglect or sacrifice the advantages of his crown; even his triumphs became fatal to his successors by raising the courage and pretensions of the English. One is sorry to say, though it be true, that a king of England ought to place his subjects in the number of his enemies, but enemies for whose happiness he is obliged to labour; and Edward was so far from being sensible of this, that he wanted to reign over the English as he had reigned over
another

another nation. England, in fine, stood in need of a master perfectly skilled in the art of governing, and this whom I speak of, was a Hero who knew only the art of conquering. He had a great number of sons, who composed his strength during his life, and occasioned the ruin of his dominions, and of the royal authority, after his death.

The descendants of the dukes of York and Lancaster, his third and fourth sons, had a long and sharp dispute for the Crown. To support their pretensions, two famous factions were formed in England under the names of the Red Rose and the White Rose. The first supported the house of Lancaster, and the second the house of York. History is polluted with the horrors to which these factions gave themselves up. Their fury, equal to the ambition of the chiefs, made England, for near a century, a theatre of blood and carnage. Such bloody principles were established between the princes of the two houses, that they can hardly be believed. The chiefs of the two parties seemed to make war on one another only to know who should have a right to exterminate most subjects. These tyrants were never
tired

tired with their barbarities ; and from a horrible despair, the whole nation associated itself, in some sort, in their fury and animosities. From this time it was no longer a regular war, it was a continued massacre. They no longer asked, they no longer gave quarter. They were no longer suffered to live in peace, nor to suffer others to live in it ; and the English would have no more masters who were not carried to the throne on rivers of blood.

The Monarchs wanted to secure by infamy a Throne which would have been much better strengthened by courage ; they regarded their elevation only as a power of being wicked. Their genius furnishing no resources to surmount the dangers that surrounded them, they had recourse to crimes ; they were all monsters either through weakness or cruelty ; and the scaffold was not the most barbarous and ignominious punishment which they made their enemies suffer.

Accordingly they experienced the inquietudes which accompany an elevation procured at the price of honour and virtue. As the greatest part had only formed a plan for their elevation, and none to support

port it, they were soon overturned. After the first intoxication of novelty, the People deserted the idol they had made. The English, animated by that spirit of independency which leads them to shake off the yoke, or by that impatience which makes them desirous of changing their Master, no longer set bounds to their enterprises. The crown had been given without equity, it was taken away by caprice: dethronements flattered the vanity of the nation, and furnished it with employment. The People, seeing several Kings pass successively before their eyes, did not accustom themselves to any; and rebellion lost its odium by becoming frequent and general.

The parliament took advantage of these divisions to complete the ruin of the royal authority. It might have been observed all along, that from the misfortunes of the Country this great Body drew their rights. They were obliged to excite or foment troubles to make themselves formidable to their masters. Their pretensions or chimeras were particularly nourished by the two factions who contended not for the hearts, but the sceptre of the English. It is true, the Peers

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had nothing more to desire since they shared the legislature power with their sovereigns ; but the Commons did not enjoy this advantage ; they nevertheless passionately desired it, and they obtained it in the manner we are going to relate.

After the death of Edward III. Richard II. son of that prince of Wales who was the greatest and best man of his age, ascended the throne. He had neither the virtues of a Christian, the qualities of a good man, nor the talents of a great king. His reign was a reign of women, favourites, and ministers. He equally wanted understanding, honesty, and manners. He neither knew to speak, to act, or to die a Prince.

The Duke of Lancaster, who dethroned him, took the name of Henry IV. The name of an usurper naturally awakens great ideas. This of whom we speak, by a humbling privilege, had neither shining vices, nor the appearance of great virtues. He knew little of war, not much of the cabinet, but was a complete master of intrigue. His reign was neither obscure nor brilliant ; his rule neither tyrannick nor paternal ; his dominions neither violently agitated,

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tated, nor always in perfect quiet. He was cried up by the Ecclesiastics because he defended the estates of the Clergy against the attacks of the Parliament; by the Devout, because he burnt the Heretics; and by the Poets, who then began to flourish in England, because he paid them well.

Henry V. his son and successor, was in the eyes of an Englishman greater than Alexander, in the eyes of a Frenchman almost a Nero, in the eyes of a citizen of the world, an ambitious Prince who suffered himself to be led into several barbarities, and a Conqueror, most of whose successes were easy ones. He owed the conquest of France somewhat to his valour, a good deal to the weakness of Charles VI. to the rage of the queen, the youth of the dauphin, and the division of the ministers.

His heir Henry VI. had not his good fortune, and still less his merit. His incapacity exposed him to the contempt of his subjects; the purity of his manners protected him from their hatred. The whole force of that violent passion was reserved for the Queen Margaret of Anjou, who left him only the name of king. This princess, the

handsomest of her age, shone equally in a circle, by the charms of her conversation; in a society of persons of genius, by the fineness and justness of her ideas; in the government of the State, by the extent of her understanding; at the head of an army, by her valour; and in a cabal, by the spirit of intrigue: her character consisted of extremes, and was liable to no exception, but carrying every virtue too far. Her nobleness degenerated into pride, her firmness into tyranny, her bravery into rashness, her policy into artifice, and her constancy into obstinacy. Another with ordinary merit perhaps would have saved the State; Margaret with great talents ruined it.

The authority she had assumed over the king and his subjects, offended the whole nation. The People seemed disposed to change their master, and the house of York seized this precious moment to make good its claim.

Richard, who was at the head of it, had genius, valour, and ambition. He was a man of deep dissimulation, of impenetrable secrecy, and possessed a firmness of mind equally superior to disappointment and incapable

capable of change. Instructed by the past, and attentive to the present, the future disclosed itself to his eyes. He knew men perfectly ; he was never deceived in his choice of confidants or of friends. In fine, he had two sons capable of aiding him in the execution of his designs, and of prosecuting them, if he should happen to fail.

With these advantages the Duke of York might succeed : but it seemed almost impossible he should not succeed when he had engaged in his interest the two men in England most esteemed, and most deserving of esteem, the earls of Salisbury and Warwick. The father was the most modest man of his age, and the son the most magnificent. The one was the greatest man in the cabinet, and the other had most talents for war. The first possessed a prudent courage, the second a heroism which rendered prudence almost useless. Salisbury knew to accommodate himself to his fortune, Warwick made himself arbiter of his. The elder never lost a friend, the younger never wanted any whom he had a mind to have. One was thought worthy of all his employments, the other superior to all places. The father would have been the greatest

man in England, had not his son surpassed him.

This triumvirate produced what was naturally to be expected from it. The loss of two hundred thousand men, about twenty-four princes of the blood, and almost all the great lords of the kingdom, was the unhappy fruit of an union, which, notwithstanding so many horrors, we are sorry we cannot find criminal. Foreign powers took part in this quarrel according to their caprice or their interests. France was for the Red Rose, and the Duke of Burgundy for the White.

Henry was at first defeated and taken by the Duke of York, who caused himself to be declared Protector and Governor-General of the kingdom. Things were carried to a greater length some time afterwards; he got his right to the crown settled in Parliament, and the upper House determined, that Henry should wear it during his life, and be succeeded by the house of York.

This was too much for a Subject, and too little for a man that pretended to be no longer one. After having aspired to the throne, the Duke was not to listen to any accommodation

dation that might remove him from it. This temperament was not to the taste of a Nation which is always in extremes. It lessened the hopes of his party, and heightened the courage of the Chiefs of the Red Rose, who repaired to the camp, and joined the colours, of the Queen.

This Princess, superior to her misfortunes, filled their minds with all her resentment, her courage, and her despair. These arms rendered them invincible, and made them triumph over their enemies. The Duke of York and his second son the earl of Rutland fell in a battle fought in these circumstances: Lord Salisbury escaped the fury of the soldiery only to lose his head on a scaffold.

The active Queen did not stay to taste the sweets of her victory; she went in quest of the fruits of it. Warwick, who had been left in London, marched out to oppose her entry. A second success crowned the courage of Margaret. The earl was defeated, and put to flight, and the King, who was in his custody, released. This unhappy Prince recovered, at once, his liberty, his queen, his only son, and his crown; and, had he been capable of feeling, would have had the

consolation of owing all these advantages to the person in the world whom he most loved.

The Queen made no doubt that two great victories would open to her the gates of the Capital. She presented herself before them with the confidence common to Conquerors. The house of York artfully turned into negotiation an affair which ought to have been determined by the sword. They retarded the progress of Margaret, and hastened that of the new Duke of York. This nobleman, after having defeated an army of Lancastrians near Hereford, had assembled the remains of Warwick's army, and marched with long journeys to London, where he made his entry without opposition. After having proudly placed the crown on his head, and assumed the name of Edward IV. he went in pursuit of the Queen, who, not thinking proper to hazard an action under the walls of a city which was against her, had retreated towards the North.

The armies met near York. Both had motives to desire an engagement, and reasons to hope for victory. Henry, or the Queen under his name, could not hope to reascend
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the throne but by successes; Edward could not maintain himself on it but by triumphs. The first was in a province that favoured him, and where his arms had been twice successful; the second on ground dyed with the blood of his father, his brother, and Salisbury the warmest of his friends. The one had the despair, the other the pride of his party, to support. The fugitive king had a greater number of troops, but the new king had better ones.

The rage of civil wars never perhaps shewed itself so much as in this bloody action. The English fought with all the vivacity of their nation, and with the obstinacy perhaps of another climate. Both sides thought of nothing but conquering or dying. Every one was solicitous, not to save his own life, but to take away that of his enemy. Those who fell were replaced by such as were behind them, with a composure which is seldom found with violent passions, but which always makes them more terrible. Forty thousand slain covered the field of battle, and Fortune seemed uncertain which to declare for. At length Edward and Warwick, the two leaders of the York faction, by extraordinary

traordinary actions, to which only great minds can give credit fixed her on their side. Secure of the victory, the proud Conquerors left the care of the ~~the~~ pursuit to their lieutenants, and took with all diligence the road to York, in hopes of surprising Henry and Margaret, who had retired thither before the battle.

The Princess, informed of her misfortune, had just left it with her son and husband. This intrepid Queen, who, contrary to her inclination, her interest, and her honour, had not been present in the action, but stayed with the weak king to hearten him, retired precipitately into Scotland, to wait for better times, or prepare a new revolution. This flight saved Edward's glory, or limited it. Perhaps he would have sullied his victory; perhaps he would have added lustre to it. His ambition and generosity make both conjectures probable. Whatever may be in this, he staid no longer at York and in the neighbourhood, than was necessary to receive the submission of the Vanquished, and to put it out of their power to retract: he then set out for London.

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A Parliament was immediately called. As victory renders every thing easy and just, this assembly solemnly approved of all that the People had done three months before in calling Edward to the throne, and all that he himself had done on ascending it. This resolution, suited to the present circumstances, was received with an applause of which the English are rarely lavish, and followed by an innovation in the government of which the posterior events will discover the importance.

It is certain that it was in the reign of this Monarch the Lower House began to enjoy the legislative power. We know not precisely in what year, because the titles, which shew it, are without date. It is conjectured with probability, that Edward was desirous by this privilege to make his coronation agreeable to the People. The ancient style of the acts of Parliament was now changed. Instead of saying, as formerly, *Granted to the prayers and supplications of the Commons by the King and the Lords*, they put: *Granted by the King and the Lords with the consent of the Commons.*

It is true, that the branch of Government which is called *executive*, was still retained

tained by Edward and his successors. The superintendency of the execution of the Laws, is a right and prerogative inseparable from Royalty, whose end is the preservation of the publick tranquillity, and the administration of justice among the members of the Body politic. However, the English have thought even this authority too much: the Parliament hath insensibly made a practice of summoning before it all to whom the King entrusts any part of this power.

After giving some time to the care of the State, Edward entirely devoted himself to the gratifying his temper. There were, if I may so speak, two different Men in the person of this Prince. His enemies had admired his elevated sentiments, his extensive genius, his haughty courage, his comprehensive views; that activity, prudence, and magnanimity which had prepared and accomplished his successes: his friends saw nothing in him now but voluptuousness, indolence, and effeminacy. More than man in the course of his exploits, he appeared less than woman in the pursuit of his pleasures. He abandoned himself to all sorts of amours;
serious

serious and comical, high and low, vague and fixed, passionate and frivolous. He made attacks on all women from a spirit of debauchery; and yet was attached to some by a fixed passion. Three of his mistresses particularly captivated him. He was charmed, he said, with the gaiety of the one, with the wit of the other, and the devotion of the third, who scarce ever stirred out of a church but when he sent for her.

What Edward had experienced in the course of his galantries, made him imagine, that no woman could withstand him. A Widow lady named Elizabeth Woodville, who without beauty had the art of pleasing, and with whom ambition supplied the place of chastity, overturned this system of self-love. The brilliancy of a throne, the warmest passion, the highest authority, and the most seducing presents were employed in vain against the proud Woodville. They could only get from her these killing words to a lover: *Though I am unworthy to be a Queen, I am above being a Concubine.* Edward, after giving into a thousand intrigues to cure his passion, at length came where the artful widow would have him. He caused her to be crowned,
and

and this marriage plunged England in new troubles.

Warwick, who had gone over sea to demand, in his Master's name, a Princess of Savoy, was too sensible of the ridicule of the part he was made to act. Not doubting that they intended to make him the laughing-stock of Europe, he formed the design of a signal revenge, and hastened his return to execute it. The Malcontents joining him, he marched against the King, fought him, and made him prisoner. Too much success often blinds men. A prisoner of this importance could not be too well guarded; yet Edward was so carelessly watched, that he made his escape, raised an army, defeated Warwick in his turn, and obliged him to fly to France. There this great man associated his revenge with that of Margaret; and their friends uniting, formed a party which dethroned Edward.

This Prince abandoned England and the throne only for a short time. Some succours which he received from the friendship of the Duke of Bourgogne enabled him to recommence the war; and with a boldness, which in great Men ceases to be rashness, he pre-

presented himself under the walls of London. Three things opened the gates to him : the Parliament, whose power he had augmented ; the inhabitants, to whom he had contracted immense debts, and who were desirous their debtor should be in a condition to pay them ; and the citizens wives and daughters, whom he had honoured, and who expected to be farther honoured, with his good graces. The assistance which Edward received from the Capital, enabled him to go and fight Warwick, who was defeated and slain ; the Prince of Wales lost his life in a second engagement, and Henry his in prison. The captivity of the Queen completed the pacification of England. Edward, free from all inquietude, gave himself up entirely to Pleasure. His affability gained the hearts of all ; Voluptuousness corrupted his own. He loved women too much, and was too much beloved by them. This taste hurt his fortune, and sullied his glory. He began his reign a Hero, and ended it a Rake.

SEVENTH EPOCH.

The Commons make themselves masters of the whole Royal authority under Charles I. A. D. 1648.

ENGLAND was scarce comforted for the loss of Edward, when the death of his two sons put her again into mourning. The Duke of Gloucester their guardian and uncle caused them to be strangled, and ascended the throne, from which he pulled them down. This Usurper, known in history under the name of Richard III. had a perverse soul in a crooked body. His physiognomy bespoke all that can be conceived bad, and yet shewed not half his wickedness. His heart, ever shut to humanity, was always open to perfidy. He was not sparing of his own blood in war; but he abused peace by shedding that of his enemies. His ferocity and ambition were the two sources of his cruelties, and he immolated almost as many victims to his temper, as to his interest. His caresses were perfidious; they were forerunners to the objects of them, of
treachery

treachery or assassination. No one was safe during this reign, because those who might have trusted to the innocence of their manners, had the imagination of the Monarch to fear. He was greedy of other peoples wealth, and lavish of his own. Few politicians could form an intrigue more artfully, and no one could ever profit himself of one better.

Every thing in him spoke or was silent, just as he pleased. It was impossible to read in his eyes the secrets that he hid in his soul. He never communicated his projects but to those who were necessary to the execution of them, and the moment of the confidence did not anticipate that of the necessity. He never left any thing in his enterprises to chance, which is often a fault in Politics; and this system hurt his interest more than once. He was a Monster who had great talents, no virtue, and every vice.

The horror of such a character astonished even the English. The wisest of them formed the difficult project of uniting the forces of the two Roses against the tyrant. After much vexation and labour they brought the heads of the two Parties, to agree to the mar-

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riage

riage of Elizabeth, eldest daughter of Edward, and heiress by her father of the house of York, with the earl of Richmond, heir of the house of Lancaster by his mother Margaret of Somerset. Richmond, the sole melancholy remains of a rejected race, passed in slavery, at a distance from his country, a life which his ancestors had finished in battle or on a scaffold. Proscribed like them, this young Prince had embarked to seek an azylum which England refused. The sea threw him on the coasts of Brittany, whose Sovereign, gained by presents, or intimidated by menaces, kept him seventeen years in confinement. Richmond was so fortunate to make his escape out of prison at the very time that the vows of the nation called him to the Throne, and his friends were paving his way to it, at the hazard of their lives. He joined them with a body of 4000 Normans granted him by France, and marched immediately against Richard.

The battle began at Sun-rising. It seemed to turn favourably for the king, who was a greater warrior than his rival, when the treachery of several of his party, and the arrival of a considerable reinforcement to the
Count,

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Count, changed the fate of the engagement. Richard might have retreated without disgrace; he had done all that could be expected from a great Captain; but he regarded with contempt those who advised him to it. His valour redoubled with the danger. He carried indifference for life, as far as it could go. He did not succumb till after making efforts of which we are sorry to find such a wicked man capable.

The death of the tyrant occasioned the flight of some of his partisans, and the submission of a greater number. Richard received them graciously, and suffered them to join his troops. The vanquished and the victors now composed but one army. The English of the two parties forgot that they had been enemies; they remembered only that they were Englishmen. Love of their Country took place in every heart of civil rage. Richmond was with one voice proclaimed king of England by the name of Henry VII. and Richard's crown, which had been found among the spoils, placed on his head.

While the Nation was indulging a joy, which it had long been a stranger to, and durst not even hope for, Henry was concert-

ing with his confidents, under what title it was proper for him to reign. His marriage gave him the rights of the house of York; he had in himself those of Lancaster, and his successes facilitated that of conquest. The Council, composed of Prelates, and other persons without views and without courage, acted weakly, and imagined they only acted moderately. Every one gave his opinion for the faction which he had been used to side with, or for the uniting of their rights. At last the generous Stanley, who had had a greater share than any one in the late revolution, who thought greatly, and expressed himself freely, stood up, and said :

“ The counsel which is given you, Illustrious Prince, proceeds rather from
 “ prudence than courage. You have pulled
 “ the crown from the head of an usurper,
 “ and have a right to wear it on what conditions you shall be pleased to impose.
 “ William I. whose conquest had so great
 “ an affinity with yours, gave his own laws
 “ to England; and that Hero and the Nation found their advantage in them. The
 “ privileges in which the Parliament triumphs,

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“ umphs, the Parliament itself, are usurpa-
“ tions which it concerns your Glory to
“ annul or modify. England, the most
“ monarchical State in Europe, has degene-
“ rated into a Republick, by the audacious-
“ ness of an Assembly, whose fury you
“ yourself have experienced. The People
“ have abused certai conjunctures to ruin the
“ sovereign authority : Have not Sovereigns
“ a right to avail themselves of occurrences
“ to recover it? A King who is truly King,
“ ought to restore to the Throne that ma-
“ jesty of which weak monarchs have suf-
“ fered it to be deprived. The Scepter
“ cannot be established in your hands, nor
“ tranquillity secured in the State, but by
“ these salutary precautions. Stifle a thou-
“ sand petty tyrants, and give us a good, a
“ wise, and a pacific king.”

The uproar which Stanley's advice occasioned, was so great, that the king had not the courage to follow it. This prince never dared to hazard a step which might as easily precipitate him from the throne, as establish him on it. He chose rather to share his Authority with the Parliament, than fluctuate between the hope of recover-

ing, and the fear of entirely losing it. However, as he bore with impatience the servitude in which that formidable Body in some sort kept him, he thought seriously of getting rid of it, and this was his scheme.

Before his right or his success had given him the Crown, the Lords were sole masters, sole proprietors of the lands. They were like so many Sovereigns, who kept their separate Courts in the Provinces, and there exercised their dominion or tyranny. They were disabled by law from alienating their demesnes, and selling their fiefs. This law had been always inviolably observed. The Commons were their vassals: they were obliged to arm at their command, to serve in the wars under their conduct, and appear in their retinue on all publick occasions.

Henry, to weaken the power of the Grantees, who by the assistance of their dependants had long counterbalanced the Royal authority, secretly caused a motion to be made in Parliament for an Act to enable the Lords to alienate their lands to whomsoever they pleased. The Peers, enervated by luxury and ruined by the civil wars, relished an overture so agreeable to their
passions

passions and their situation. The immense sums proffered for their Fiefs, made them sacrifice their most valuable interests. They did not, or would not perceive, that this regulation, so agreeable to them, would prove fatal to their descendants. They wanted foresight, and the King wanted it likewise. This innovation, by raising the Commons very much, became by degrees the ruin of the Royal authority and of the Aristocracy.

Henry's conduct on this and several other occasions, would induce me to think, with some historians, that he was not a Politician of the first rank. He had good sense, but wanted genius. His judgment was solid, but his imagination cold. He saw things clearly, but did not see far into them. He knew to lay hold of consequences, but the great, the first principles escaped him. He succeeded in all his projects; but his enterprises bore the mark of the mediocrity of his character. If he had not the penetration necessary to prevent conspiracies, he had wisdom and valour sufficient to break them; without appearing jealous of his authority, he had the sole rule: a strong and continual application

supplied the place of readiness and genius. All the wisest men in England laboured for his glory, without suspecting it. He consulted them, but he had the secret to appear to receive their advice more from esteem and modesty, than from any want of it. His mysterious air served admirably to cover the slowness of his reflexions, and to give him the reputation of a finesse, which they pretended to discover in the most indifferent events, and even in the mistakes he committed. By such a singular contrast, he was at once both niggardly and magnificent, and his policy made advantage of both these passions, or tastes; the one served him to impose on people, and the other furnished him with treasures that enabled him to make himself feared. Nature had not designed him for a great man; but he appeared one, and perhaps was not far from becoming one.

With fewer talents and more vices Henry VIII. his son and successor, reigned more peaceably, more absolutely. This Prince owed the extensive authority which he exercised, to a very famous event which in another age, or under another climate, would

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would have lost him without resource. He inspired his Parliament with a respect for the Throne, by instilling into them a contempt of the Tiara. He strengthened the ties which united his subjects to him, by breaking those which bound them to Rome. The English thought it better, or at least more singular, to be the arbiters of Religion than of the State, and gave into this change of scene with a fury unbecoming a philosophical people, but which favoured Henry's designs.

That Monarch bore with impatience the yoke which joined him to his brother's widow. This tie, which was at first odious to him, became in time insupportable. Interests of State had long prevailed; inclination insensibly got the ascendant. A peevish old woman could ill balance a complaisant young Mistress. Anne of Bullen was the object of all the king's tenderness; Katherine of Arragon had not even the coldest attention paid her.

While Love made Henry desire the elevation of his Mistress, Hatred of the Emperor dictated schemes to Wolsey for the fall of the Queen, who was his aunt. The
Master

Master and Favourite united their desires and their anger; they laid the foundation of that famous divorce which ruined the Roman Catholic religion in England, and of a nation of Martyrs made it the Country of Heretics.

The Court of Rome, where this grand cause was pleaded, had then for its head Clement VII. of the House of Medicis. This Pontiff unhappily turned into a negotiation an affair where only the lights of the Holy Spirit were required; he wanted to be a Politician where it was only necessary to be a Christian. The fear of offending Charles V. and his friends, if he should consent to the dissolution of the marriage; the inconveniency of souring Henry and his Allies if he did not consent; the advantages of his family, whose fate depended on the Emperor; the interest of the Holy See, which required that nothing should be done to disgust England; above all, the irresolute character of Clement, whose life had been spent in liking and disliking, in raising armies and disbanding them, in making alliances and breaking them: All this formed an infinite number
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of intrigues, which far from answering their end, daily multiplied and became more involved.

Love, and especially the passion of a Sovereign, agrees ill with the delays of the Court of Rome, Henry sought in his own dominions the condescension which he had not found abroad. Cranmer, archbishop of Canterbury, pronounced the sentence of divorce which the Pope had always deferred under various pretexts ; and Anne haughtily ascended a throne from which Katherine was forced to come down after a reign of twenty-two years.

Charles V. whom the Spaniards often compare to Solomon for wisdom, to Cæsar for valour, to Augustus for good fortune, did not dissemble that his Aunt was degraded purposely to throw an indignity on him. He took this affront like a Prince not used to receive one. All Europe heard his complaint, and Rome undertook to justify it. This Court, whose circumspection is known and admired by the whole world, departed from its maxims on this occasion. After having been too slow when the point was the granting a favour, it shewed

shewed itself too precipitate when the lancing its thunder was the question. By hastening to fulminate the sentence of excommunication, Clement secured the reputation of an imprudent Pontiff; and Henry, by despising it, the reputation of an irreligious Prince.

The example of the king proved more contagious in England than usual. The Parliament abandoned their religion without much boggling; all whom the authority of this great Body could not draw after it, lost their heads on a scaffold, and by an event not much to the honour of English constancy, the number of these heroic minds was much less than among every other nation on such occasions.

The independency of the English behoved to be flattered with an object not less considerable than a Schism, to fix the Parliament, at all times so unquiet, in the interest of a Prince whose proper character was Inconstancy. Six Queens shared his bed successively. Repudiation was the fate of two; and two left their crowns on a scaffold; the others employed their wretched days in fearing the one, and perhaps in wishing for the other. Inconstant in his designs, he projected

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jected successively the ruin of France, the depression of Spain, and the aggrandisement of England: He might have accomplished the whole; but he contented himself with desiring, or at most with commencing it. Inconstant in his alliances, one while he declared for Charles V. one while for Francis I. and sometimes remained neuter: He loved the frankness of the one, he detested the fineness of the other, and by a caprice quite contrary to his interest, he was oftener and longer in alliance with the first than with the second. Inconstant in his friendships, his ministers, his favourites had all a tragical end. Wolsey, perhaps the greatest politician, certainly the most wicked man of his age, escaped the executioner, because he did not avoid disgrace. Inconstant in his opinions, he wrote against Luther, and acted against the Pope; he merited the title of Defender of the Faith, and that of Persecutor of the Church; he admitted Briefs and excommunications from Rome: his life was a series of contradictions. He was never constant but in his rage. By his own acknowledgement, he spared no woman in his passion, nor any man in his anger; and, according

ing to the words of a celebrated Englishman, if all the portraits of a merciless Prince that are in the world, were lost, they might be painted a second time exactly after nature, by drawing the life of Henry VIII.

Edward his son but just made his appearance on the stage; he acted no part, it is conjectured however that he would have been an excellent performer. The Protestants already looked on him as their Apostle, and the Catholics as a Fanatic, who would one day put their faith to the trial. He had not time to give more than a glimpse of his love of virtue and capacity for business; but he lived long enough to fully his reign by an act of injustice, to which the insinuations of an ambitious Minister, and his liking to the reformation, led him. He removed his two sisters Mary and Elizabeth from the throne, and called to it Jean Gray his cousin.

This young person, whose learning had changed her religion, adorned her mind, formed her morals, and elevated her sentiments, discovered the most determined and most sincere repugnance to the part which they pressed her to act. She had too much knowledge,

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to be ignorant that the sceptre offered her, did not belong to her; too much integrity, to compass her elevation by injustice; too much humanity, to seek to profit herself of another's misfortune; too much policy, not to be sensible that her part in the drama would be ridiculous and short; and even too much philosophy to sacrifice the tranquillity of her private station to the embarrassing eclat of the Diadem. The obstinacy of her Parents triumphed at length over her resistance. She paid with her life a forced royalty of nine days, and died more gloriously on a scaffold, than Mary lived on the throne.

The new Queen had adhered to her Religion in a kingdom which had deserted it. To establish it without opposition, she married Philip son of Charles V. The royal Pair laboured in this great work with all the haughtiness, rigour, and inflexibility of their tempers. They employed as sanguinary methods to bring back the English to the Unity of the faith, as Henry VIII. had used to carry them from it. A religion of gentleness armed itself with the sword. The destruction of the Protestants seemed to be more advanced, and even more desired than
their

their conversion. It was determined, to obtain by precipitation, by violence, by authority, what ought to have been the work of charity, of patience, and of zeal.

The Parliament, overpower'd, if I may so speak, by all the reputation, power and pride of the Spanish Monarch, studied the humour of the Queen, and gave into arrangements, through weakness, which they ought only to have agreed to from motives of religion. It consented to a reunion of England with the Holy see; and what was not so praiseworthy, signed the warrant for the execution of all who opposed them. Such a blind complaisance retarded the destruction of that great Body, which had been sworn; and another cause rendered ineffectual the measures taken to succeed therein.

When Philip married Mary, she was ugly, old, sickly, and peevish. The ambitious Spaniard sacrificed his dislike, to the desire of adding a rich Crown to the many vast Estates, which he was soon to inherit. The Queen's barrenness confounded his views, and put an end to the complaisance of a selfish Husband, who, besides, had just taken possession of the immense spoils of Charles V.

From

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From this time the resolutions of the Court of London were very little influenced by the Council of Madrid.

Mary was afraid of shewing too much affection for a Prince who despised her, should she sacrifice her Parliament to him; or of running too great a risk, should she hazard a step which perhaps would not be supported. She was agitated by these thoughts, when her death placed on the throne the greatest Princess perhaps that ever ascended one.

Elizabeth, whom universal admiration hath placed above all critique, I might almost say, all praise, took the reins of an agitated Empire, of which a thousand enemies, all formidable, and all dangerous, meditated the ruin: such were Philip II. whose restless and profound policy knew to make traitors in the councils of all Princes, and raise parties in all States; the Duke of Alva, the support of his Master by his victories, and the destroyer of society by his cruelties; the Duke of Parma who joined to the subtilty of an Italian the phlegm of a Spaniard; Katherine of Medicis, who chose to compass by crimes what she might have as easily carried by virtue; the Duke of
M Guise,

Guise ; whose good fortune to succeed in all, gave him boldness to undertake all ; Sextus V. who counted dominion as nothing if he trampled not on Crowns ; Mary Steuart, whose misfortunes have been so great, they have rather obscured, than heightened the lustre of her good qualities : some passionate writers add, the Society of Jesus, whom they calumniously call a naked sword, whose hilt is always at Rome.

After all, Elizabeth saw round her throne rocks still more dangerous than the storms which threaten'd it at a distance. The Catholics, who suspected her creed, though she still professed their religion, seemed disposed to dispute her right to a Crown, which, on their principles, did not belong to her, as Henry's union with Anna Bullen was only a concubinage. The Innovators, whom persecution had too strictly united, were resolved to rule, or to bury themselves under the ruins of the Throne. The Irish, slaves of the court of Rome, and pensioners of that of Madrid, blindly espoused the passions of those two Crowns. The Grandees all set up pretensions, either to govern the Queen, or to marry her, or to destroy her. The Parliament

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liament was the more greedy of authority, that for a considerable time it had had none.

The Queen saw all these rocks ; and avoided them by those grand strokes of policy which form a very rare spectacle on the theatre of the world, because it is not common to see actors of Elizabeth's character. We are astonished even at this day, how a young Princess, without experience, without friends, without advice, without a right to the throne wholly unquestionable, was able to reign with more dignity, authority, and tranquillity than any monarch who then wore a Crown. While all Europe was a prey to domestic divisions, foreign wars, factions, poisonings, scarcity, assassinations, and all the horrors which will render the sixteenth century odious and famous, England saw her commerce extended, her laws strengthened, and her polity perfected. History ought to collect with care the sublime principles of such a perfect administration.

Elizabeth, without her Parliament doing any thing but causing her orders to be executed, was enabled to present this grand spectacle to the world by a judicious moderation,

ration, which made her wisely despise the silly brilliancy of conquests; by a noble jealousy, of the supreme power, which she equally knew to maintain by insinuation and force; by fixed and invariable principles of government, from which nothing could make her depart; by a scrupulous attention to suppress all rising abuses, or to confine them within the precise bounds which policy required; by a singular dexterity to improve opportunities, which she never lost either through want of diligence, or too much precipitation; by the equivocal talent, which may be both commended and blamed, of sowing enmity, and eternising discords among her enemies; by a choice of her Ministers, her Generals, and even her Favourites, always decent, judicious, and useful. To these great talents Elizabeth added an appearance of the solid and shining virtues which are the ornament and support of a throne. Though sovereignly ambitious, she seemed disinterested; zealous for the Church of England, yet indifferent to all Rites; passionate for the happiness of her subjects, yet idolising only her own glory; full of frankness and probity, though not
over-

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over-scrupulous in business. She united the little vanities of a woman to the great sentiments of a Hero, the foibles of the Sex to the labour of the other, many of the failings of a private person to all the qualities of a perfect Sovereign. Statesmen, Ministers, and Kings, alone can form a proper judgment of Elizabeth.

James King of Scotland, who succeeded her, ascended, by a way strewn with flowers, a throne at which they scarce ever arrived but through seas of blood, and cabals. Tho' a foreigner, and head of a Nation abhorred by England, he was received with such signal transports of joy, and his arrival excited such universal and loud acclamations, that an honest Scotsman of his retinue could not forbear saying, that the English were enough to spoil a good king. Sentiments of so much affection and respect were not natural to the Nation; accordingly they did not last long; and it is more astonishing that James should occasion them, than it is surprising he should see them end. This Prince wanted to be pacific, and he was only indolent; wise, and he was only irresolute; just, and he was only timid; moderate, and he was

only soft; good, and he was only weak; a Divine, and he was only a Fanatic; a Philosopher, and he was only extravagant; a Doctor, and he was only a Pedant. He set up for a Controversionist, and seemed prouder, says an historian, of having written against the Cardinals Bellarmin and Perron than a Conqueror would be who could make use of *Veni, vidi, vici*. No one ever carried the pretensions of the Crown farther than James, and few Princes have contributed so much to vilify it. One can scarce be greater in speculation, or less in action. He thought like a Philosopher, he acted like a woman.

However, he began his reign with a step which bespoke a King determined to be one. In the proclamation which he published for calling a Parliament, he took upon him to specify the necessary qualifications of the Deputies of the Commons. His Predecessors had often done it, but by way of exhortation: James employed a kind of command, and seemed resolved to suffer none to vote but such as had all that he required. This innovation openly struck at the privileges of the House of Commons, which enjoyed

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joyed the sole right of deciding the validity of the election of its own members.

The pretension of the Monarch offended the subjects. James was afraid of a revolution where there was scarce a murmur. This Prince loved rather to live quietly, than reign gloriously. He took the party of abandoning the care of the State to his Parliament, and even consulted it, ever after, on the affairs of his family that were of any importance. This arrangement was like to prove fatal to that great Body, by the despair into which it threw a part of the Nation.

The Roman Catholics, depressed by Elizabeth, had hoped that a King son of Mary Stuart would favour them. The dependance on his Parliament into which that Prince had put himself, made them imagine that the yoke under which they groaned, was going to be made still more heavy. They determined to break it, by one of the blackest conspiracies that have ever troubled the peace of the world.

These sanguinary followers of a Religion sacred to meekness and charity, took the barbarous resolution to destroy the Prince

and all the members of Parliament when assembled at Westminster, that, delivered from their principal tyrants, they might restore to their Communion the superiority which they thought due to it, and which it had long held. To execute their design these mad-men hired the houses adjoining to where the Parliament was to meet, and amassed Gunpowder and combustibles under Westminster-hall. The first men of the island for birth and wisdom would have inevitably perished, had not an anonymous letter written to Lord Monteagle by one of the Conspirators, to prevent his coming to the house, occasioned a suspicion of the Plot. All the vaults were searched, and in the entry of one of them was found a person, who in a few hours was to set fire to the mine, and blow up the Parliament. Fear, rather than remorse, got from this wretch the whole secret of the Plot. Some of the Conspirators were killed in defending themselves from being taken; several fled the kingdom; eight were apprehended and put to death. Robert Catesby, a private Gentleman, and Thomas Piercy, of the house of Northumberland, seemed to have been the
chiefs

chiefs of the conspiracy ; it is pretended that the Jesuits, the greatest philosophers of any who by inclination, or situation in life, devote their days to the reforming and propagating Christianity, were the real authors of it.

These Fathers, who carry humanity, arts, and religion to every quarter of the world ; who are Lawgivers at Paraguay, Sages in China, Missionaries at Canada, and Martyrs wherever they must be such, were accused of being the leaders of sedition in Great Britain. They have constantly defended, without being able to clear, themselves. Three things make their innocence very doubtful : There reigns in their apology a bitterness which is not in their character. They have endeavoured to support their defence by a miracle. In fine, they were at the head of the Roman Catholics of the country, a rank which their merit gives them every where else.

Whatever may be in this, the Parliament, after the discovery of the Plot, become more absolute, and the king more dependent than ever. This Prince found it easier to suffer injuries, than to revenge them ; to dispense with the public esteem, than to merit it ;
and

and to sacrifice the rights of his crown, than to trouble his repose by maintaining them. He lived on the throne like a private man in his family. He retained of the royalty only the gift of healing the Evil, which is attributed to the kings of England. One would have said, he was only a Passenger in the vessel of which he was or ought to have been the pilot. This inaction made his days pass in obscurity, and prepared a tragical reign for his successor.

Scarce had Charles I. ascended the Throne, when there appeared a mutual disposition to hate one another, and even a settled antipathy, between him and his subjects. While the king engaged successively in a thousand projects, whose variety was more proper to make him be despised than feared, the Nation strengthened itself in the resolution of thwarting every thing contrary to its privileges. On one side appeared a growing pride which could never suffer contradiction; on the other, an inflexible obstinacy which would be always incapable of management. The Monarch gave into profusions which could not be supported but by ruinous measures; the People were sunk in a
sordid

fordid penuriousness, which the greatest abundance did not diminish. The Court had a vain, subtle, and precipitate policy; the Parliament a slowness in their deliberations, which, without serving their Country, distracted a young Prince. Such opposite inclinations must necessarily clash in a region like England. A dangerous man, who after having been the father's Favorite, was the son's Idol, hastened that fatal instant.

George Villers, Duke of Buckingham, had precisely all that was necessary to spoil his masters, and to ruin them. He was the handsomest man in Europe, and the most addicted to galantry, magnificence, and pride. He had the mind of a Frenchman, and the heart of an Englishman. No one could speak more gracefully, nor act more nobly. He knew all the arts of a Court, and despised them; he was ignorant of business, and assumed the sole direction of it. His courage shone equally in the heat of an engagement, and amidst dangers viewed in cool blood; but his foresight in discovering danger, was not equal to his firmness in supporting it. Placed on the right
hand

hand of the throne from his first appearance at Court, and used to compliances from the Sovereigns, he detested the subjects that dared to make any resistance to him ; and prosecuted them with fury, but without cowardice. Dissimulation he always regarded as a crime. In his vengeance the flash preceded the thunder ; and his enemies had always notice of the hurt he intended them. Extreme in his hatred, the Favourite was blind in his friendship. One was fit for every thing if he had the advantage of being his relation or friend. His generosity extended even to persons the most indifferent to him ; and he took more pleasure in conferring favours, than others had in accepting of them. In return for so much profusion, he had not one true friend. Though presumptuous, he was capable of listening to prudent and modest advice, and did not find one of so much gratitude to give him any. To be a great Man, he only wanted, perhaps, that passion which hath rendered so many other favourites odious : He aimed only at what was Agreeable or Noble ; had he been ambitious he would have formed Useful designs. His
private

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private resentments decided of all publick affairs, and the turn which these took, could not be more humbling or unhappy.

Buckingham had gone to Spain to negotiate the marriage of the Prince of Wales, which did not succeed ; and he had been afterwards sent to France, to receive the Princess promised to his Master. He carried his usual spirit of galantry with him in his embassies. In the first he counterfeited a passion for the Duchess of Olivares, and in the second felt a real one for the Queen Anne of Austria. He was secretly punished for the one, and openly despised for the other. These two treatments, which, though different, rendered him almost equally ridiculous, provoked him against the two nations : he got war declared against them. The English arms were worsted every where, when the Favourite was assassinated. His death was the seal of peace abroad : perhaps, with a little address Charles might have restored it also at home. This Prince had called three Parliaments one after another. The two first had obstinately refused supplies for supporting a war, which they did not approve because it was the work of Buckingham ;
the

the third granted him a subsidy, but 'on such humbling conditions, that he abruptly dissolved it also, and too haughtily and strongly promised never to call another.

To enable him to do without the aids which the kings his predecessors usually received from these Assemblies, Charles revived certain fees which custom had abolished, imposed taxes which the Parliament had refused, and exacted contributions with a haughtiness never known in the island. He had forgot that the King, who is elsewhere the sovereign Judge of the Nation, from whom there lies no appeal, in England is only the first Magistrate of the kingdom. According to his principles he ought to be as absolute as any Monarch that ever wore a Crown.

‘ From the maxim, that the Parliament
‘ owed its existence only to the concession of
‘ the kings, and that this concession could be
‘ revoked, naturally arose this consequence,
‘ that the King might govern without a
‘ Parliament, and consequently impose taxes
‘ on his People, as he should judge proper for the support of Government. From
‘ the maxim, that the King was above the
‘ Laws,

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‘ Laws, it necessarily followed, that there
‘ was no security for the Subjects, and that
‘ their honours, estates, liberty, and even
‘ their lives were at the King’s disposal.
‘ From the maxim, that the Parliament
‘ had no right to intermeddle in affairs on
‘ which the King did not ask their advice, it
‘ could not but be concluded, that the King
‘ was to be left to do all that he pleased, even
‘ what was most prejudicial to the Nation.
‘ From the maxim, that it was to be wanting
‘ in respect for the King, to complain of
‘ his government, it was necessarily to be in-
‘ ferred, that the Parliament could not en-
‘ quire into any grievance, nor complain
‘ of it, since grievances are, for the most
‘ part, only acts of injustice committed by
‘ the King or by his Ministers. From the
‘ maxim, that the Parliament had at most
‘ but a right to represent grievances to the
‘ King, after which it ought quietly to wait
‘ for redress from the King himself, it fol-
‘ lowed, that the King might oppress his
‘ subjects at his fancy, without being obliged
‘ to remedy their hardships any farther
‘ that he should think proper. From the
‘ maxim, that it was offending the King
‘ in

‘ in the most sensible part, to question the
‘ extent of his prerogative, this consequence
‘ could not but be drawn, that the prero-
‘ gative was without bounds, or that it could
‘ not be limited but by the King’s own
‘ wisdom or goodness.’ All these maxims,
as it is easy to perceive, tended to esta-
blish an arbitrary, and consequently an
unjust, government. Charles had reigned
about twelve years in this manner, when he
rashly gave himself up to the violent and
precipitate counsels of William Laud, Arch-
bishop of Canterbury.

This Prelate was a man of mean extrac-
tion, small fortune, and great virtue. He
had an active genius, an extensive capacity,
and austere manners. His temper was sour,
his heart open, his behaviour a little rustic.
He loved his Country, his King, and his
Church. The Vice and the Person were
equally insupportable to him; unbelievers
as odious as infidelity; the exterior rites
of Religion dearer perhaps than the essen-
tials. Unhappily he had zeal; and the objects
of this zeal were as precious to the English
as if they had really had religion.

Since

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Since Great Britain had left the Church of Rome, systems were so much multiplied, that it was said, if all Englishmen were obliged to set down in writing the articles of their faith, there would not be two alike. Amidst these numerous sects, there were two whose exterior bonds united a great number of partisans. The one, in shaking off the yoke of Rome had retained Episcopacy and a part of the ceremonies of the ancient Church ; the other had overturned all subordination, and abolished all external shew, as contrary to the simplicity of the Gospel. The first were called Episcopalians, or Church-of-England men ; the latter Presbyterians or Puritans, and were Calvinists. The one would have an Aristocracy in the Church ; the others a pure Democracy. Episcopacy was the established Religion in England, and Presbyterianism in Scotland. The King, animated by the Archbishop, wanted to introduce the English Liturgy every where, and make the Religion of Great-Britain uniform.

The Scots, alarmed for their Religion, engaged themselves by a seditious act, called *the Covenant*, to take up arms in de-

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fence of it; and Leslie, an officer of reputation, was chosen to command their troops. Charles was in a condition at first to overpower them; his irresolution stopt the thunder. The rebels, more attentive to their interests, knew to repair the inequality of their forces by intrigues. They dispelled the storm by gaining those who accompanied the King in that expedition: All his Courtiers readily listened to the proposal of a Treaty.

The earl of Arundel, by an effect of his usual inconstancy, was weary of being General. Sir Henry Vane, an active and intelligent man, had applied himself to his own private affairs. The earl of Pembroke hated War as much as he loved Hunting. The earl of Holland, whose policy was wholly confined to an entire conformity to the inclinations of his master, was afraid of the desolation of Scotland, because the King was afraid of it. Old Sir Edward Cooke was pleased with the idea of soon finishing a troublesome journey, which he had never thought necessary. The earl of Essex alone remained firm in the King's interest. He constantly refused to see the Scots Commissioners,

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sioners, or even to hear their proposals. An equivocal Treaty was concluded, which every one interpreted afterwards as they pleased. Charles disbanded his army, the Scots augmented theirs, and they found a support in one of the greatest men that ever lived.

Cardinal Richelieu, who had the singular privilege of rendering his passions and his talents, his vices as well as his virtues, of use to the State which he governed, had a personal interest in troubling England, which, to revenge Mary of Medicis, had supported all the parties formed in France against him. The assistances of a powerful Man who lavished them, and the counsels of a Politician who was seldom mistaken, gave new life and strength to the commotions which agitated Scotland. Charles saw himself forced again to take up arms against his subjects, and Lord Conway was charged with the first operations of the war.

In this Lord centered qualities which are rarely found together; intrepid courage in war, and infinite subtilty at Court; the esteem of Statesmen, and the friendship of the Trifling; a violent love of pleasure, and a strong application to study; a real zeal

in his heart for Religion, and a determined disbelief of it in his mind; the baseness to betray all parties, and the address to gain the confidence of all factions.

Posted advantageously on the banks of the Tine to dispute its passage with the Scots, he fled with a precipitation which less hurt his valour than his probity. In these circumstances, the earl of Strafford, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, joined the remains of the army which he was to command. The spirit of sedition, which he remarked in it, did not check his courage. With his 8000 Irish, brave, well disciplined, and inviolably attached to his person, he promised, on his head, to drive back the Rebels to their mountains, and never had this great Man been accused of temerity.

The King, who saw himself surrounded by a victorious and haughty enemy, a discouraged and corrupted army, a discontented people that supported, or at least did not oppose the rebellion, a Court where all those vices together reigned openly, refused his consent to such a generous resolution. Thinking his party ruined when it was only in danger, he assembled all the Peers of the
king-

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kingdom, a thing without example for several ages. This Assembly, though composed of all the first Nobility, brought together only men of narrow views, who saw nothing; timid spirits which every thing frightened; deceitful men who had dangerous views; perfidious souls, who betrayed their Sovereign and Benefactor. Charles found nothing in it but haughtiness; no good counsel, and still less of any aid. In this extremity the unfortunate Monarch determined to call the bloody Parliament of 1640, to reconcile himself, if it was not past time, with the English, and to arm them against the Scots.

Most of the Peers who composed this too-celebrated assembly, were corrupted, and all the members of the house of Commons fanatics. The Upper House was displeased with the king; the Lower House detested monarchy. The first had no Religion, and the second, had, what was more dangerous, one that was an enemy to order. The one wanted only to humble the Sovereign; the other was determined to destroy him.

The Lords most against Charles were, the earl of Bedford, who loved better to

hold the first rank in the Parliament, than to be only the second at Court; the viscount Say, who made it a point of religion, to hate all who were not Puritans; the earl of Warwick, the most corrupt and hypocritical man in England; the lord Mandeville, the idol of the People by his profusions, and of good men by his mildness; the earl of Essex, whom Chance always introduced in great scenes, and whom Nature had destined for obscurity; the earl of Holland, a republican rather from caprice than principle or sentiment; the earl of Northumberland, who carried contempt for his Masters and ingratitude to his Benefactors to the greatest excess; and lord Herbert, who engaged in a Party, because he was put into it, and who adhered to it because he was told he must do so.

Monarchy had no enemies among the Commons more violent, of greater credit and address, than Pym, with whom long experience supplied the place of penetration, virtue, and services; Hambden, who was all that he had a mind to be, and never was what he seemed to be; St. John, a dark, reserved, headstrong man, seditious
by

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by principle and temper; Fennes whom the Ministers of Geneva and the Rebels of France had fortified in a contempt of Authority; Vane, whom deep dissimulation, joined to a forward genius, made a very fit member of a faction; and Holles, who had nothing blameable in his conduct but the motive that directed all its springs.

As the King had few friends in the Parliament, and those weak ones, his enemies were masters of all its deliberations. They began by entering into a close union with the Scots army, which, by an agreement made with Charles, was to remain in England till the Parliament had restored Peace between the two nations. The English, who meditated a rebellion, kept no longer any measures with the Monarch when they saw themselves supported by Rebels whose protection insured them of impunity. To take from the throne the only prop that remained, they accused the earl of Strafford of labouring to overturn their religion and liberties. This illustrious nobleman was guilty of a much greater crime: he loved, he served his King. Such an atrocious plot, which began in injustice, was to end in se-

dition. Those Peers who held in abhorrence the shedding such pure blood, were exposed to the rage of the people by the intrigues of the Lower House ; weakness kept several away ; and fear forced from others a shameful sentence.

The King, who had been sometimes great, seemed disposed to be so on this occasion. He not only refused to acquiesce in this act of injustice ; he manifested his indignation. The clamours of a seditious populace, and the counsels of some timid friends, were equally despised. Charles spoke like an irritated Master, a tender Friend, a grateful Monarch. It may be said, that Strafford sacrificed the king's glory to his own. To be great, he almost forced his Sovereign to an act of meanness. The weak Prince granted to the request of his Minister what he had refused to the menaces of his Parliament. The Malcontents were permitted to immolate the victim, and every age will remember that Charles I. signed the warrant.

The generous Strafford supported at his death the glory of his life. He found more honour on the scaffold, than he had acquired in a thousand combats, and regarded not as
a punish-

a punishment a death useful to his King. The sacrifice of his life secured him the reputation of the best of subjects. His success at Court, and in the Army, had already ranked him with the first politicians and greatest generals. One forgot, on seeing him, that he was the most powerful and the richest man in the nation ; and only thought him the greatest Genius. His conception was so quick, he had no need to study. He expressed himself with so much grace, he had no occasion for knowledge. His Genius perhaps was too exalted. This ascendant inspired him with a contempt for others, which he did not take care to dissemble. Pride, which is the common defect of English heroes, was particularly that of Strafford. He never desired but what was just ; but in the choice of means, always preferred the violent. Had it not been for the too-high opinion he had of himself, which led him, if I may so speak, to think himself a God, he might have been the first of Men.

By the tragical end of Strafford, and the imprisonment of the Archbishop of Canterbury, who in a little time after underwent the same fate, the king lost both his eyes,

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as it was then expressed. Their places, and those of some others, who, by retiring into foreign countries, saved the Nation from additional crimes, and the king from new weaknesses, were filled up by the most seditious Lords of the kingdom. The Parliament insisted on this piece of complaisance; and the King hoped the expedient would cure his subjects of their distrust. He received his Ministers from the hands of his persecutors.

The enemies of Monarchy are out of their place in the council of princes. Charles found none in his but traitors, who delivered him up to Rebels. The Parliament was desirous that he should sacrifice to them the right which the Kings enjoyed, of banishing and imprisoning without discovering the causes; he sacrificed it: that he should give up his claim to all the taxes that were levied by his orders, and made a part of his revenue; he gave them up: that the two tribunals designed to support the honour and rights of the Crown, should be suppressed; he suppressed them: that he should engage himself to call a parliament regularly every three years; he engaged to do it. In fine, the Parliament was desirous that it might not be dissolved but with the consent
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of the two Houses ; this audacious demand was also granted. The day after this fatal consent was given, the earl of Dorset came into Charles's chamber, covered ; and being put in mind, where he was, he replied, that there was no longer any King in England.

In fact, scarce had the Parliament acquired the power of prolonging its duration at pleasure, when they demanded to have the disposition of the armies, fortified places, ports, and arsenals of the kingdom. Incensed at these proud pretensions, the English Monarch remembered that he was still on the Throne, and that it behoved him to support himself on it without shame, or come down from it at least with glory. He armed, and this return of courage brought back several whom the animosity of his enemies had prepared for that change.

The good subjects whose love of Order formerly made them displeased with Charles, had long detested in their hearts the conduct of the Malcontents who usurped his authority. They thought it still more strange, that the Parliament should want to govern without a King, than that the King should want to be without a Parliament. The
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constitution of the Government suffered a greater alteration by the one than by the other. They put up prayers against the Tyrants, while they waited for an opportunity to make efforts against Tyranny. The Prince's resolution made these fine sentiments shine out ; and Europe saw with pleasure, that fidelity to the Sovereign was not quite banished from England.

Two Parties, still famous at present, then began to divide the Nation. The one was composed of Episcopalians, and of those to whom the royal authority was yet respectable. The other was made up of Presbyterians and Republicans. The first were called afterwards Tories, the second had the name of Whigs. It is not my design to describe the sanguinary events produced by those divisions. Never was so much blood shed, nor so many crimes committed in England. The war was carried on with more brutality than bravery, more obstinacy than constancy, more impetuosity than understanding, more animosity than emulation, more fury than heroism. The Honour of the Royalists prevailed, at first, over the Despair of the Parliament Party, the good cause over the bad, Religion

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ligion over Fanaticism. Charles was in the road to triumph if he had had in council that courage which he had in the army. He could do every thing, and dared do nothing. Perfidious friends twice stopt him on the way to London, whilst the Rebels were taking infallible measures to depress him, by the advice of Oliver Cromwell.

That illustrious Villain, who cannot be praised without horror, nor despised without injustice, whom we are forced at once to admire and detest, by his superior understanding already advised the Parliament which he was one day to govern. To prevent the ruin of that assembly, Cromwell projected the alliance with Scotland; and his party, which was almost ruined, became thereby more powerful than ever.

The Scots, who had formerly given law to Charles, were afraid of being obliged to receive it from him, should he attain to fix Victory on his side, who was beginning to favour him. To prevent a submission which they were pleased to style slavery, they entered into a league, of which, it appears, they did not wholly discover the design. They were flattered with the pleasure of securing their liberty,

liberty, with the advantage of establishing Presbytery, and with the honour of protecting England. Rebellion united two Nations divided by an antipathy of fifteen centuries. London and Edinburgh joined their claims, their murmurs, their projects, and their policy.

The ruin of the Royalists now became inevitable. Some advantages gained over the English Republicans had no influence to prevent the junction of the forces of two great Kingdoms. Charles, with a Party of whom some were perfidious, many wavering, and few determined to conquer or die, could not resist Enthusiasts without number, guided by an abominable but profound policy. Barely to suspend the fall of the King required prodigies, and whilst Cromwell was performing them in England to hasten it, Montrose did the same in Scotland to retard it. These two celebrated Men fixed the eyes of all Europe on them by talents rather different than opposite. Montrose had an integrity of heart, which always fixed him in the interest of his King and Country; Cromwell a superiority of genius, which gave an air of equity to
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the most criminal actions. The one succeeded in forming a party without any assistance but his courage ; the other got to be at the head of his party by great address and policy. The first excelled in raising troops, and hardening them to cold and hunger ; the second in keeping together and subsisting them. The Scots Hero had a boldness which disconcerted the measures of the most methodical warriors ; the English Hero formed a system of his own, and followed it, but without slowness and without timidity. Montrose did great things for the pleasure of doing them, and the honour of having done them ; Cromwell had more interested views, he wanted to reap the fruit of his cabals and exploits. Vanity properly made the character of the first, Ambition was the ruling passion of the second. This shewed himself superior to his misfortunes ; that, greater than his successes. The one experienced a thousand treacheries, and stifled them ; the other knew men so well, that he was never deceived. The Scotsman often lost his most zealous partisans by suspicions injurious to their glory. The Englishman brought back his enemies by a seducing

ducing confidence. With the first one had great hopes of conquering; with the second one was sure not to be beat. If the crown could be kept on Charles's head, it was by Montrose; if it must fall from it, it was by Cromwell. The Republican was as much superior to the Royalist in depth of judgment, as he was inferior to him in goodness of heart. The one resembled the Greek, the other the Roman Heroes.

Montrose's first successes have the air of Romance in History. Entering Scotland singly and in secret, he inspired some bold fellows whom he got together, and 1200 Irish who came to join him, with an extreme affection to his person, his Party, his King, his glory, and his extraordinary actions. Without baggage, without artillery, without stores, without fortresses, without intelligence, without money, without resources, and almost without arms, followed only by three thousand men, but three thousand men whom he himself had formed for war, he gained four battles, defeated a hundred Parties, surpris'd twenty-four Castles, forced the best towns, and spread
terror

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terror through the whole kingdom. Abandoned by the first troops he had levied, deceived by many whom the necessity of his affairs made him employ, proscribed by the Parliament, surrounded by secret enemies, beset by two, three, and sometimes four armies, attached to a Prince who communicated his ill-fortune to all his friends, Montrose never received but one check. He had repared that misfortune by his activity, valour, and good fortune ; he had accomplished the conquest of all, or almost all, Scotland, when a new scene of the most complicated tragedy that ever was, entirely changed the situation of affairs.

The King, after supporting, with various success, a cruel war against the English Rebels and the Scots whom they had called to their assistance, became tired of struggling against the stream. Borne down by the weight of his misfortunes, and seeing no day in the chaos of his affairs, nor any issue in the labyrinth into which the thread of events had carried him, that unfortunate Prince precipitated himself into the abyss that appeared to him least terrible ; he went and threw himself into the arms of the Scots army,

O

hoping

hoping to find there, not obedience, but compassion.

Leslie, who commanded the Rebels, received the Monarch, as a respectful, but not as a faithful subject. He persuaded him to regain the hearts of his subjects by opening the gates of all the towns devoted to his interest, and disarming the different bodies of troops that still fought under his colours. The faults committed by those in great places are not always free; they are often the fatal and necessary consequences of the unhappy situations wherein persons find themselves. Charles granted all because he was not in a condition to refuse any thing. From the time of that fatal order, there remained not the smallest vestige of the Royal party in the extent of the two Kingdoms. All submitted, excepting the invincible Montrose. That great man preferred the glory of a good subject, to that of a formidable conqueror. The banishment to which his Master was forced to condemn him, appeared to him more glorious than an independence stamp'd with the seal of Rebellion. He forced himself from the bosom of the warriors whom he had so often lead to victory in Scotland,

to

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to go to make the Christians triumph over the Infidels in Hungary.

While this Hero went to lend the assistance of his arm to another Nation, the Parliament of England bought of the Scots the odious privilege of committing the greatest of crimes. The King, informed of the price for which he was delivered up, cried out with indignation, that he chose rather to be with those who dearly bought him, than with them who meanly sold him.

When Charles was carried into England, there were two factions in the Parliament, the Presbyterians and Independents. The first wanted only the abolishing of Episcopacy, and the diminution of the royal power; the second were for the extinction of monarchy and consequently for the death of the King. Ireton, Cromwell's son-in-law, and head under him of the Independents, founded the dispositions of the Lower House, which he harangued in these terms: "The
" patience of the first tribunal of Eng-
" land hath been too long abused. The
" caprices of an obstinate King have cost the
" Nation already so much blood, that it
" would be imprudent longer to delay re-

“ pressing his fury. The Contract between
“ Kings and their People contains a mu-
“ tual engagement of protection and obe-
“ dience; we are refused the one, we are
“ therefore set free from the other. All Europe
“ has its eyes on you, to see if you have as
“ much firmness to secure the public safety,
“ as you have shewn understanding to
“ know wherein it consists. Delay not
“ to take the most generous party; the
“ brave men by whose assistance you have
“ so often triumphed, assure you, by me,
“ that their courage is not diminished, and
“ that their zeal for their Country is still
“ the same. They desire only, that they
“ may not be obliged to seek in their own
“ strength that security which they would
“ chuse rather to owe to the promptitude
“ and vigour of your resolutions.”

While Ireton was speaking, Cromwell studied the countenances of the assembly, and read in their looks what judgment he was to form of their sentiments. After this proof, an infallible one to a man of his character, he delivered up the Parliament to the Army, of which he was the idol, and excluded, or imprisoned by force of arms, about two hundred members

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members of the Lower House, whose consciences disagreed with his designs. He did not stop here : well assured that the Upper House detested his villainies, and would never come into his views, he got the Commons to come to a resolution, that to them alone belonged the power of enacting laws, and that they had no need of the consent of the Lords, the sovereign power being originally in the people. A tribunal was afterwards set up under the title of the High Court of justice, the members whereof were taken, some from the army, and some from the Commons, by whose authority this court was erected. Charles was cited before these madmen, who justified the choice that had been made of them. The most horrible catastrophe did not cost them a sigh, nor the blackest crime the least remorse. England became the theatre of such a horrible spectacle, as no other nation has ever had occasion to blush for. A generous king was condemned, like a tyrant, to die on a scaffold ; and this horrid scene was viewed with as little concern as if he had been the last of men. The Presbyterians, says a celebrated Writer, furnished
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the axe which cut off the king's head, and delivered the victim ready bound to the Independents, who cut its throat.

The unfortunate Monarch was brought to this tragical end by the passions of Buckingham, the impetuous zeal of Laud, the haughtiness of Strafford, the indiscretion of the Queen, the divisions of his Council, the treachery of his favourites, the union of his persecutors, and the ambition of Cromwell. The best master, the best friend, the best father, the best husband, the best Christian, perhaps the honestest man of his age; to be a great King he only wanted to know his own talents. He had sufficient application, to govern his dominions; sufficient abilities to command his armies; sufficient bravery to overcome his enemies; sufficient generosity to disarm the rebels; sufficient understanding to know the interest of his Crown; and sufficient moderation to respect the rights of his people. Unhappily he distrusted too much his own strength, and gave himself up without reserve to the passions of his Ministers and the caprices of his Favourites. His reign was properly the history of these different characters.

acters. To procrastination succeeded precipitation ; to despotism, popular maxims ; to a taste for war, the love of peace ; to an extravagant inflexibility, an excessive mildness ; to a denial of what was most reasonable, a concession of what was most unjust ; to grand intrigues, little finesses ; to a desire of embroiling all, an inclination to unite all. To draw this Monarch at one stroke, he was the sport of his friends during his life, and the victim of his enemies at his death. He saw it approach like a great Man, and discovered neither weakness nor ostentation.

The hands of the Parricides were still reeking with the blood of their Sovereign, when they sought impunity for the crime they had committed, in new ones. Three precautions, all three extreme, appeared to them necessary to guard their guilty heads from the thunder which threaten'd them. They had murdered the father, they outlawed the Princes his sons as his accomplices ; they had degraded the House of Peers, they suppressed it as useless ; they had vilified Monarchy, they entirely destroyed it as fatal to the happiness of the People. From this time the whole sovereign

authority resided in the House of Commons alone.

The new Republick, actuated by Cromwel's extensive and sublime genius, procured England a tranquillity which it no longer hoped for, and gave it a lustre which it had not had for several centuries. It had just been agitated by a most violent tempest, and now all was calm ; it had thought itself on the brink of ruin, and was now in condition to give law. It is melancholy for the honour of Virtue, that one of the best and greatest spectacles which the Annals of Nations present, should be the work of Rebellion. Every thing appeared wonderful in this revolution. The Royalists conformed to a kind of government ill adapted to their tempers, and disapproved by their consciences. The Grandees, accustomed to the part of Legislators, remained quietly in the rank of private subjects. The Irish and Scots, who had taken up arms, the first from attachment to their kings, the others to efface the horror of their treachery, were unhappily subdued. The Dutch, who had taken advantage of the calamities of England to usurp the empire of the Seas, were humbled. France and Spain, who had been
always

always rivals, always enemies, meanly courted the friendship of the Usurpers. The Sovereigns, who ought to have united to revenge an outrage to which all Kings were exposed, either through fear or interest applauded the injustice. All Europe debased itself, was silent, or admired.

Cromwel was the secret spring of these master-strokes of policy. The oracle of the Parliament by his wisdom, and the idol of the People by his courage, he moved these two bodies at his pleasure, and made them equally subservient to his views and the Glory of the Nation. When the Tyrant saw that the prodigies of his administration had made that impression on the minds of men which he had promised himself, he disdained a borrowed authority, and would have a power of his own. As his system was, to cause honours to be decreed to him, and not to usurp them, he took a very round-about way to attain the end he proposed.

The army had long cherished a haughty, violent, and open dislike of the Parliament. When Cromwell had no longer any interest in suspending the terrible effects of this dangerous passion, it acted with all the audaciousness

ousness which is common to brave men when they think themselves highly offended. They did not confine their demands to a reformation of the State; they would have it done by another assembly. The Parliament endeavoured to hide the fright into which these pretensions threw it, by a false air of courage which it did not long support. It wanted to disband a part of the army, and disperse the rest, to hinder them from caballing against the Government. This haughtiness irritated men who did not expect to find resistance; both sides grew warm, and every one took his party agreeable to his inclination or his interest. In the end, those who were armed gave law to those that were not. Twelve deputies of the Army, and twelve of the Parliament, were chosen to project a new form of Government.

The Parliament-men regained in the Conferences the superiority which they had lost when the affair was before their own house. They persuaded the Gentlemen of the Army, that their common interest required that things should remain on the antient footing. Cromwel saw the instant which was going to disconcert his views, and prevented

vented it. Hitherto an indifferent and disinterested spectator in appearance, he now openly declared for the Army, of which he was General. He went to Westminster followed by his principal officers, and drove out with contempt the Parliament which was there assembled, and which wanted to shake off his yoke. This ambitious man had it then in his power to make himself master of the Government; but he would have obtained from the People and the Army as a favour, what he was resolved should be one day granted as necessary. To bring matters to that point of maturity where he desired them, he expressed great zeal for the most popular administration. The Council of Officers, who had dissolved the Parliament, at his instigation put the sovereign authority into the hands of an hundred and forty persons chosen out of the three kingdoms, which they represented.

The new Tribunal, which took the name of Parliament, was designedly composed of the most ridiculous, extravagant, and disrespected persons in the three nations. When these silly men had been guilty of so many blunders, as to expose them to the laughter
and

and indignation of the Publick, Cromwell's friends persuaded them to resign a troublesome power, which exposed them to so much uneasiness : they consented. The ambitious spirit, who artfully conducted all these intrigues, now saw his Policy crowned, as he had formerly seen his Boldness triumph. The Army joined the Parliament in requesting him to take the Government wholly upon himself. He wanted to be forced to it. They saw themselves reduced meanly to solicit the chains which they dreaded. The Tyrant did not yield till after a resistance of several days, and discovering an offending coldness; and still he wanted to seem less to accept the authority, than to cease to refuse it; and to make it be believed, that he had more capacity than desire of ruling.

When they had overcome the hypocritical modesty of the proudest of Men, Flattery was employed to chuse what title might best please the Usurper. His Vanity would have been for the most pompous; his Policy made him prefer a modest one. He rejected that of King, which would have drawn on him the hatred of the People, and accepted

cepted that of Protector, which served to conciliate their affection. Under the first of these two names he would have appeared more Master; he was more so in fact under the second. By setting bounds to the complaisance of the English, he spared them a shame, and consequently himself opposition. These preliminaries of his reign prognosticated its wisdom, and insured its tranquillity.

Cromwell was not one of those men who have appeared unworthy of empire as soon as they have arrived at it. He had a genius adapted to all places, all seasons, all business, all Parties, all Governments. He was always what he ought to be; at the head of an army the bravest; in council the wisest; in business the most diligent; in debates the most eloquent; in enterprises the most active; in devotion the most fanatic; in misfortune the most firm; in an assembly of divines the most learned; in a conspiracy the most factious. He never made any mistake, never let slip an opportunity, never left an advantage incomplete, never contented himself with being great, when he had it in his power to be very great. Chance and natural temper, which
determine

determine the conduct of other men, did not influence the most inconsiderable of his actions. Born with an absolute indifference to all that is praise-worthy or blameable, honest or dishonest, he never considered Virtue as Virtue, Crimes as Crimes; he regarded only the relation which the one or the other might have to his Elevation. This was his idol; he sacrificed to it his King, his Country, his Religion, which he would have defended with the same zeal, had he had the same interest in protecting as in destroying them. The system of his ambition was conducted with an art, an order, a boldness, a subtlety, and a firmness, of which, I believe, History can shew no example. All sects, all ranks, all nations; peace, war, negotiations, revolutions, miracles, prophecies; all advanced the fortune of the hypocritical Usurper. He was a man born to decide the fate of Nations, Empires, and Ages. The splendor of his talents hath almost made the horror of his outrages be forgot. Posterity at least will question whether Oliver Cromwell better deserved execration or admiration.

The fall of his son Richard followed close
upon

upon his elevation. He was long enough Protector for his shame; too short a time for good or ill to accrue to England from his administration. He had neither vices nor virtues, at a time, in a country, and in a station, where perhaps both were equally necessary. His degradation, which was principally owing to his weakness, left the kingdom a prey to three factions, who seemed to be going to renew the bloody scenes, of which the bare remembrance chilled every heart with fear. The Parties who were to fill the turbulent stage of England, were, that of the Parliament, Lambert's, and the King's.

The Parliament was that very party which had embrued their hands in the blood of Charles I. changed the Monarchy into a Republick, and which is known in history by the name of the Long Parliament, because it lasted twelve years. It was dispersed in 1653 by Cromwell, who wanted to gather alone all the fruit of the crime which they had committed in concert. The stratagem made use of for re-assembling it, was, to give out that it had been called under the late King, that it had never been dissolved, and that it still subsisted. It is not
easy

easy to conceive, how the army, who had joined in all the violences of the Protector, should cast their eyes on that Parliament which they had offended, rather than others which had since been assembled, or on a new one which they might form. I am inclined to think, that the propension to the Royal party, which was discovered in many worthy men, made the army prefer an assembly personally interested in perpetuating injustice, accustomed to the most odious catastrophes, and ready, if there was occasion, to immolate the son to their own ends, as they had formerly sacrificed the father.

The power of the Parliament was counterbalanced by that of Lambert. This General had not precisely the virtues which make a great man; he had the less honourable, but more uncommon qualities of a Leader of a party. His judgment, without being very extensive, was adapted to form and maintain factions; his heart without being upright, was generous; his eloquence, without being strong, persuasive; his air, without being noble, engaging; and his behaviour, without being agreeable, seducing. He had the ambition to aspire at all; the
assurance

assurance to give out that he deserved all, and the good fortune to make himself be believed. By the brilliancy of his courage he astonished the most audacious; by the activity of his proceedings he wearied the most indefatigable; by the singularity of his projects, he disconcerted the ablest; and by the extent of his pretensions stopt the most ambitious. He surpassed in pride the most haughty, in wiles the most subtle, in knowledge the most experienced, and in constancy the most obstinate. Cromwell did him the honour or indignity to fear him, and to regard him as his rival. I am of opinion he would have been his successor, had a second usurpation been as easy as the first. The tyranny of the one had apprized the English to guard against that of the other. It was Lambert's misfortune to come some years too late.

While this General, whose elevation could only be promoted by the misfortunes of the Publick, embroiled the Army, of which he was the soul, with the Parliament, of which he was the abhorrence, the Royalists were putting up prayers, and hazarding some steps for their Sovereign. Charles II. was not then in

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England.

England. Despised by some Powers, deceived by others, and abandoned by all, he carried his misfortunes to divers countries of Europe ; and, to the shame of humanity, met with more contempt than compassion. His cause at length found an avenger, and his Partisans a leader, in General Monk.

The Character of this Hero had hitherto escaped the discernment of a Nation better skilled in the knowledge of the Sciences than of Men. He was thought to be an honest man, but of a narrow capacity ; bold in battle, but timid every where else ; greedy of riches, but exempt from ambition ; proper to make war, but incapable of conducting it ; admirable in an under-part, but displaced in a first. They would have it, that he had whims, but no passions ; that he was a slave to decorum, and a stranger to virtue ; that he had no fixed principles in Religion or Government, and suffered himself to be led by chance ; that he continued always below what was great, of which he had no conception, and which he did not see even when set before him ; and that he was only a tractable instrument in the hands

hands of Cromwell, whom the death of the Usurper was going to render useful.

The part which Monk acted in the revolution that restored the English monarchy, undeceived the Nation. Whether it was, as I believe, that this General had intended to do a service to his King as soon as the feuds between the Army and the Parliament made it practicable; or, as some historians conjecture, that he only followed Virtue when he despaired to see his ambition crowned; it is certain, that he discovered a talent unknown in England, and seldom carried to so great a length even in that nation of which *Finesse* forms the character and is perhaps the security. I find in all his conduct a wise policy, which brings forth only such projects as probity avows, or duty commands; a prudent policy, which desires only possible things, and only at the time they are possible; an impenetrable policy, whose views cannot be discovered, and still less the means that are to insure the success; an insinuating policy, which opens to itself weak minds by caresses, the great by confidence, the bad by services; an artful policy, which turns against its enemies

the long intrigues, the subtle windings, the deep dissimulation, with which they want to entangle it; an active policy, which loses not in useless deliberation, moments favorable for acting and advancing; and a firm policy, which finds in its sword and genius wherewith to strengthen itself against difficulties, or to surmount them. Monk sets out from Scotland, of which he was Governor, and where he was adored. He puts himself at the head of an army which he had levied, harden'd to the toils of war, led to victory, and attached to his interest. He enters England, where he routs by his lieutenants the miserable remains of Lambert's party, who is himself taken, and shut up in the Tower. He penetrates as far as London, where he dissolves the factious parliament then assembled, and calls another, in which the House of Peers, abolished immediately on the death of Charles I. is restored, and whose first act of authority is to recal the King. If I am not mistaken, the British Annals present not such another instance of a profound, moderate, and virtuous Policy.

The Prince whom this happy revolution
placed

placed on the Throne, had a settled turn to pleasure, and superior talents for business. He could be, at will, the most agreeable, and the greatest man of his age, and by a philosophy not common to Kings, he loved rather to be happy than celebrated. He was more debauched than voluptuous, rather impetuous than delicate in his pleasures; and as his Mistresses could not say much in praise of his fidelity, they had no reason to complain of his jealousy. Nothing can be added to the bad opinion which he had of both sexes; he thought all Women void of virtue, and all Men void of probity: what passed in his Court seemed very much to justify this idea. Liberty was properly his idol; to put him under constraint for a moment, was to render one's self odious, and one became insupportable to him by appearing embarrassed in his presence. Though no one could be possessed of more dignity, he so greatly detested the ceremonial, that he never was King one quarter of an hour during his whole reign. No Prince of his time was so full of flattery and ingratitude; he thought himself dispensed from rewarding services, because he

was persuaded they were done only from motives of interest. He talked much, but so well, it became a Proverb, that he never said a foolish thing, nor ever did a wise one. He suffered himself to be governed by his Ministers, who all together did not see so far, nor so well, as himself; and he chose rather to adopt their mistakes, than to give himself the trouble to correct them. Hypocrisy was not of the number of his vices; he openly disregarded Religion as well as Morality, and the Roman-Catholick religion, which he professed when dying, probably served less [say the persons of that communion] to insure his salvation, than to honour his memory.



E I G H T H E P O C H.

*The Parliament assume the right
of disposing of the Crown under
James II. A. D. 1689.*

THE re-establishment of Charles II. on the throne of his fathers was properly no more than a shifting of the decorations which gave notice of new scenes. The Hearts of the English being as fanatical as their Heads are philosophical, gave rise to the new revolutions, as they had done to the old. The power of the Presbyterian Republicans who abolished Episcopacy, had fallen with the Rebellion; the Church-of-England Royalists, become the masters, to revenge the outrages offered to their tenets, wanted to extirpate Puritanism, As it would have been too odious openly to attack but one sect in a country where they were without number, they were all comprehended in the same condemnation: they proscribed all that are known by the name of Nonconformists.

It was in the first Parliament called by the
P 4 King,

King, that this odious and precipitate step was taken. The Court soon perceived that the Chancellor Clarendon had sacrificed the grandeur and interest of his Master to his own fondness for his opinions. As the Monarch had formed the design of making himself absolute, he ought to have studied to gain the affections of his people; and they revolted the minds of half the Nation without any hope of advantage. To quiet the Presbyterians, whose character or numbers rendered them formidable, and to serve the Catholicks, whose maxims favoured arbitrary power, it was proposed to restore liberty of conscience. Clifford, Arlington, Shaftsbury, Lauderdale, and Buckingham, of whom the four first were Ministers, and the last the King's favourite, were the authors of this enterprize; and they were employed to pave the way for its success.

Clifford was honest, violent, and headstrong; he seemed unconcerned, and I believe he was so, about his fortune, quiet, and glory. Three things wholly took him up; the aggrandisement of the King, the ruin of the Church of England, and the propagation of the Religion of Rome. Had his virtue been
less

less severe, or his principles less strict, he might have been of great service to his Country.

Arlington repaired the mediocrity of his genius, the slowness of his operations, and the narrowness of his views, by an exquisite judgment, a strong application, and a profound knowledge in foreign affairs, acquired by experience: as persons were not on their guard against him, he rarely miscarried in his enterprises.

Lauderdale acted a borrowed part almost his whole life. He was a Republican, and laboured to establish a pure Monarchy; a Presbyterian, and supported Popery; violent, and employed all the subtleties of intrigue. He had a wrong judgment, a prodigious memory, and more knowledge than would have been allowed him any where but in England. He was never to be convinced of his errors, but most commonly recovered from them of himself provided he was not told of them; two sorts of enemies were determined to destroy him; he always got happily clear of them: and had Lauderdale's counsels been followed, the King would have had the same success against his.

Bucking-

Buckingham had a noble air, an agreeable wit, and the talent of turning every thing into ridicule. He was a stranger to Religion, but to combat it; to Virtue, but to despise it; and to Friendship, but to betray it. He set out with corrupting the King his Master, proceeded in traducing him most indiscretely, and ended in being hated by him. He inspired successively every passion; admiration, by his good qualities; envy, by the favour he was in; contempt by his morals; hatred by his malice; and compassion by his misfortunes. He confined himself to being the most frivolous man in the Nation, though born to be the greatest and most useful. The portrait of Shaftsbury shall have a place a little lower.

The five lords regarded the affair of the Toleration as essential, because it was to be the basis of that edifice of arbitrary government which they wanted to erect; but they did not expect to see it succeed without great difficulties. To prevent or surmount them, they entered into an indissoluble union between themselves; the King strengthen'd himself by an alliance with France, and a war against Holland was resolved on, in order
to

to have a pretext for keeping an army on foot. After taking these prudent arrangements, Charles no longer delayed to publish the declaration for liberty of conscience, and to suspend the execution of the penal laws against the Non-conformists.

It is probable that the chagrin which this vigorous blow gave the Church of England, would have been the only bad consequence of it, had not the funds on which they depended for supporting the burden of the war, failed all at once. In this dilemma, the King saw himself forced to convene his Parliament; and the Parliament, who knew how much the King stood in need of them, declared they would grant no subsidy but on condition that liberty of conscience should be revoked.

Charles was in one of those absolutely bad situations, wherein one cannot take a good party : it appeared to him humbling, to ruin his work ; and dangerous, to support it. On one side he saw his glory in danger, and on the other his safety. He behoved either to give up his projects, or the assistance necessary for supporting them. The statesmen, which does
not

not always happen, were for the honourable party; and the women, which is very uncommon, for the shameful one. The one made the Monarch apprehensive, that the Parliament, emboldened by its first successes, would carry its ambitious views too far; the others assured him, that this condescension would for ever attach to him that great body. The declared Royalists wanted him to support his pretensions by the army which was under the walls of London; the secret Republicans never mentioned without horror an expedient which threatened the overturning of the kingdom.

The King hesitated; and when one hesitates he is already determined to take the worst party. As the present instant was always what most influenced the resolutions of the voluptuous Prince, he readily enough sacrificed a future, which seemed to him uncertain, and which perhaps was distant, to the offers of his parliament, the caprices of his Mistresses, and his own inclination: the Non-conformists were again proscribed; and the Ministers who had conducted the momentous work of the Toleration, saw themselves in danger. They knew that the
King

King was not so scrupulous in the matter of probity as to support the authors, after having abandoned the work. They were afraid of being delivered up to the resentment of the two Houses, by a timid Monarch who sacrificed to them his finest projects. Shaftsbury, the most culpable, if to serve one's Sovereign be so, was the victim which the enemies of Monarchy were most desirous to sacrifice. He parried the blow by abandoning the Court interest, and became the Leader of the Republicans.

This man, so famous in English History, was one of those extraordinary characters which are more frequently to be met with in Great Britain than any where else, and which contribute to the glory, or reproach of a Nation, according to the idea which is formed of things. Nature had given him a capacious mind; labour procured him profound knowledge; ambition made him aspire to important intrigues; abilities placed him in them; and good fortune made him succeed. He was a sincere friend, a dangerous rival, an implacable enemy, an unquiet neighbour, and a generous Master. The talent of speaking began his reputation. A strong, vehe-

vehement, even pleasant, but proper, eloquence set up a kind of throne for him in the Parliament; he reigned there: in vain did they deliberate; he brought all over to him by conviction, by the sense or fear of ridicule. From this advantage sprang that facility with which he formed cabals and factions. A strong determination to dare every thing, justified that sovereign air of confidence which he affected with his accomplices; he never was guilty of an useless crime; but ever hazarded, without remorse, all those which he judged necessary to his revenge, his reputation, or his interest. He was perhaps the first man, who, without being inconstant, changed his side five or six times; he related with pleasure the reasons of his variations; and one could not help admiring the time, the manner, and the circumstances of them. A perfect acquaintance with the talents, humour, and views of all who had any part in the business of the Nation, laid the Future open to him in a manner that partook much more of certainty than conjecture. His knowledge was infallible only in Politicks; he gave into capital errors in all other things. He carried Atheism into Religion.

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Religion, a confusion of Good and Evil into Morality, Pyrrhonism into History, and Astrology into Physics. It is possible to draw two portraits of this singular man, both good, both resembling each other, and both opposite.

As Shaftsbury was openly all that he was, the King quickly perceived that he had made himself a dangerous enemy, and the People were sensible they had acquired a powerful Protector. The new Cromwell, less subtle, but still more resolute, more determined than the old one, sought by signal marks of revenge to make himself regretted by one party and desired by the other : he had wanted to debase the Parliament, he formed the design to destroy Monarchy.

This project appeared extravagant at the first view. The People had but lately experienced horrors, which ought naturally to keep them on their guard against the restlessness of factious minds. A new revolution in the government necessarily renewed the same scenes. The alternative could only turn on the revenge of an injured Minister, and the ambition of a thousand tyrants. Such
reason-

reasoning would have been conclusive any where but in England, and made an impression on any other but Shaftsbury.

This daring Man saw at first that he might reckon upon the Whigs, enemies of Monarchy by their politics, and of the king by their religion. The revocation of liberty of conscience had lately exasperated that Party, which was altogether Presbyterian, and had disposed them to depart from their obedience; but since the restoration of the Monarchy they were too much weaken'd to be able of themselves to effect a change in the State; Shaftsbury undertook to make the Tories, notwithstanding their being Royalists and Church of England men, concur with them; and he hoped to overturn the throne by the same hands that had set it up.

The uniting of the two Parties was a kind of chimera which had been attempted a thousand times to no purpose. It was become more difficult since the affair of the toleration, wherein one part of the Nation had been sacrificed to the other. This event had augmented their jealousies, and awaken'd all the reasons which they imagined they had to hate one another. It required
unknown

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unknown and very powerful springs to bring together hearts so much estranged, and to give the same ideas to minds that had quite opposite principles. Shaftsbury succeeded in it; we are going to see in what manner.

All England had for a considerable time suspected that the King wanted to establish Popery and Arbitrary Power; but it only suspected it. Their doubt changed into certainty on hearing what Shaftsbury said in Parliament. This faithless Minister was not ignorant of any of his Master's secrets, and he betrayed them all. He artfully pointed out the necessary relation which the alliance with France, the war with Holland, and liberty of conscience, had with the two objects which the Nation most dreaded. To give additional weight to his words, he acknowledged himself guilty of favouring those designs, and seemed disposed to expiate what he had done too much for the Sovereign, by the services he would render the People.

The artifices of Shaftsbury had more effect than he expected; and he expected a great deal. All accustomed as he was to lead the multitude, he never had had such complete success. Liberty, Law, and

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Religion

Religion appeared in the greatest danger. Whigs and Tories, all were alarmed. They demanded a remedy with one voice from him who had discovered the evil.

Shaftsbury, who knew the men better than they knew themselves, perceived in these clamours more of that vivacity which moves to complaint, than of that fury which determines to the greatest crimes. He did not despise the English quite so much, to lay open his whole design to them. A King with whom they were only dissatisfied, did not seem to him a victim yet ready; he thought it better to confine himself at this time to the destruction of the Duke of York, who was detested. He hoped that the Monarch would support the Prince his brother against the Nation; that the minds of Men would be imbittered by these divisions; that with a little address the Court and the People would be made irreconcilable; and that the Parliament would be one day led of itself to what it would be dangerous to propose to it too soon. As Shaftsbury was indifferent whether the Duke lived or not, and was only concerned to prevent his reigning, he had no thought of demand-
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ing the blood of the Prince; he laboured only to get him excluded from the Throne. A most unaccountable event facilitated to him the means.

Titus Oates, a most wicked man, according to some, a most foolish one, according to others, and, in my opinion, both the one and the other, forged the most horrid and ill-concerted calumny that ever proceeded from the mind of man. He charged the Papists with forming a conspiracy to destroy the king, overturn the Government, set up Popery on the ruins of all the others Religions, and to cement it by the blood of those who professed them. The General of the Jesuites was the leader of this enterprize. The Pope, the King of France, the King of Spain, the Queen of England, and particularly the Duke of York, supported it. They had amassed such immense sums of money, given such good orders, levied such numerous armies, found such experienced Generals, and chosen such able ministers, that two hours were to suffice for accomplishing the revolution.

Posterity will scarce believe, that one of the wisest and most virtuous nations in the world was so blind, to believe this revery, or so

unjust to shed blood without giving credit to it. Notwithstanding numberless contradictions, which ought to have made the accusation be despised, and the informer punished, the Catholics were treated with as much severity, as if they had had nothing to say for their innocence; their effects were seized, they were imprisoned, exiled, and put to death. These barbarities were daily multiplied, when Shaftsbury presented to the Parliament the winding up of a Tragedy which had lasted too long. To depress the Catholics at one blow, he proposed that the Duke of York should be declared incapable of ever ascending the English Throne. The Bill of exclusion was prepared, and immediately received by the Commons, and afterwards carried up to the Lords, where the intrigues and promises of the Monarch got it rejected. Shaftsbury did not, for that, relinquish his project; he more than once renewed his prosecution, but always found some Royalists too many among the Lords. Time and the death of this Malcontent calmed by degrees the minds of men. The sceptre passed from Charles's hands into those of the Duke of York with a tranquillity which
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did not recall what had gone before, nor announce what was to follow.

James II. carried with him to the Throne confined talents, some useless virtues, many essential defects. The elogium with which the wise Turenne honoured his first exploits, gained him in the beginning a reputation for Valour, which he ill supported. Labour gave him the knowledge of a subaltern in the affairs of the Navy; he wanted genius to acquire that of a General and Sovereign. His application, however strong and continued, did not supply the want of penetration in business, which Nature had denied him. It was said of the two brothers, that Charles could see all if he had a mind, and James wanted to see all if he had been able. His friends (for, though a King, he had some, and deserved to have them) had reason to praise his constancy; his ministers his firmness; his courtiers his frankness; his servants his generosity; his treasurers his exactness; his allies his fidelity; and his children his tenderness. Unhappily his subjects had reason to be dissatisfied with his administration. Ambitious by nature, he found himself confined by the Laws, and

aimed at despotism ; proud, he scorned to disguise his pretensions, and laid his views too open ; violent, he despised the way of insinuation, and wanted to obtain his ends by force ; obstinate, he never desisted from his enterprises, and chose rather to lose all, than draw back ; revengeful, he never pardoned, never dissembled an injury ; and by not knowing to forget faults properly, drove his enemies to the commission of the greatest crimes.

A Prince of this character stood in need of judicious men capable of preventing his faults by their wisdom, and of repairing his passion by their moderation ; unhappily he listened only, to Ministers either unfaithful or incapable ; to a Queen, who, though an Italian, was more headstrong than politic ; and to a Confessor (Father Peters) who had all the ambition with which his Society is reproached, without their abilities ; he could at most make Profelytes, and he was left to govern the State. It was perhaps a misfortune, that this Prince's Mistresses did not intermeddle in the government. James would not have been the first Monarch whom they have rendered great. It is probable that their minds resembled

sembled their persons, which were always so disagreeable, that Charles II. said, his Brother seemed to receive his Mistresses from his Confessors, who gave them to him by way of penance.

The portrait which I have just drawn, does not promise a peaceable, happy, and glorious reign. The Duke of Monmouth, natural son of Charles II. and the Earl of Argyle, the greatest lord in Scotland, disturbed the beginning of it. These two had been banished their country in the life-time of the late King, for treason; their crime had united them in Holland; rebellion led the one to England, and the other to Scotland; despair made them arrive there ill attended; incapacity occasioned them to be defeated; and justice immolated them on a scaffold.

Two victories, the most decisive that could be desired, gave James's arms a reputation and authority, which made him precipitate his designs. This Prince had the happiness [say the Papists], to be a Catholic, and the ambition to communicate his happiness to all his subjects. He employed in the execution of this enterprize the Zeal which makes a Missionary famous, not

that which renders a great King illustrious. His steps followed one another with a precipitation which did more harm to his prudence, than honour to his religion. He began with making the twelve Judges of England (greater slaves, it was said, of court favour, than of justice) give it as their opinion, that the Sovereign had a right to suspend the execution of the Penal Laws enacted by Parliament. This first advantage prepared and brought on another more important. The King revoked the *Test* act, by which they abjured the real presence of Christ in the eucharist. This Law, which excluded from employments and from the parliament all who refused to submit to it, had been levelled against the Roman Catholics in the reign of Charles II. What afterwards happened was now foreseen, that the two Houses, the Army, the Fleet, and all offices were going to be filled with persons of the King's religion. At last James granted liberty of conscience to all his subjects, to the end that the Papists might enjoy it without jealousy. What completed the disgust of the Nation, was an useless and ill-timed spectacle of the publick entry of a Nuncio,

Nuncio, and the contempt with which an obstinate and prejudiced Pontiff (Innocent XI.) affected to treat the King's ambassador at Rome.

This series of indiscretions on the part of the King, who was not sufficiently beloved to make them be forgiven, nor sufficiently feared to make them be dissembled, nor of sufficient abilities to repair them, stirred up against him four sorts of enemies, all dangerous, but from different principles: The factious men, who were heirs of the projects and fury of Shaftsbury, and enemies, like him, of order, subordination, and the diadem: Such Fanatics, as saw no road to Heaven but that which Henry VIII. and Elizabeth had traced out, and who had that aversion for the Roman worship which is common to those that are little or not at all acquainted with it: Those Subjects, who, accustomed to be ruled by the laws, were afraid of being ruled by the King; they were good Englishmen, but bad Royalists: And the Malcontents who had been obliged to yield their places to the Catholics, and who sought in rebellion a security which the partiality of James prevented them from finding in submission.

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To move properly, and without confusion, such a complicated machine, required the most ingenious springs; and yet it may be questioned whether the Leaders who united these Parties, possessed superior talents.

Admiral Herbert loved precisely all that he was unfit for; pleasure, and he was gloomy; business, and he was negligent; society, and he was rustic; war, and he had no views; he thought himself the first man in the Nation, and the Court lost him because it did not think the same. Lord Mordaunt was brave, impetuous, eloquent, generous, and singular; he had a quick conception, a wrong judgment, and could conceal nothing. Russel possessed an intrepid soul. His enemies owned that no danger astonished his courage, no misfortune shook his firmness, and no disappointments exhausted his resources: the same favourable opinion was not entertained of his probity. The earl of Shrewsbury was looked upon to be a man of honour and a good man, though he had spent his whole life in changing his religion, and seeking the true one: with all his knowledge, he thought himself obliged to be as smooth, gentle, and politic as other men. Sidney had too much sensibility

lity of heart, too much levity of mind, and perhaps too much flattery in his behaviour: his indolence made him precipitate affairs which others precipitated through imprudence: a success which was to be waited for, was none to him.

Such were the English Lords who first dared to set up the Standard of revolt. However great the number of their partisans might be, England did not seem to them a safe stage on which to begin their vengeance; they carried their discontents to the Dutch, and confided the secret with the Prince of Orange.

The ambitious Stadtholder had long aspired to the British Throne; Shaftsbury had given him the first idea of it, or at least confirmed him in it. William, however, did not indulge this hope but in proportion to his prospect of success. The uncertainty of the issue, not the crime, stopt him. He saw a possibility in this enterprise; but he was of such a character, not to embark in it till he had rendered it infallible. The ties which connected him with the English Monarch, were not to be broken but with infinite precaution. Success, indeed, might diminish

diminish the horror of his attempt ; but he behoved to succeed, or expect to be the laughing-stock of Europe, and the execration of mankind. The preparations for bringing this design to the desired point of maturity were made with all possible vigour, order, and secrecy. Only a few, of whom they had had long trial, were employed. The commotions which disturbed the State destin'd to be invaded, were doubly turned to the advantage of the Prince ; he supported them under-hand, and at the same time offered the King his father-in-law the assistance of his good-offices and his arm. The storm which was gathering against James insensibly increased. The Malcontents soon exceeded in number the faithful subjects. William saw himself in a manner sure of England ; he laboured to secure the neighbouring States.

France was the only Power of Europe that warmly espoused the interest of James II. The revocation of the Edict of Nantes, by which Religion gained nothing, and the State lost a great deal, had extremely weaken'd that monarchy ; however it had still strength enough to support its Allies
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and give jealousy to all its neighbours. This grandeur, of which the lustre ought to have been tempered by the policy of the Ministers, was exaggerated by the flattery of the Courtiers. Every thing done, every thing spoke at the Court of Lewis XIV. was to the mortification of other Courts. The Prince of Orange, the most proper genius for intrigue that the last age produced, had not occasion for all his talent, to form, in these circumstances, a League which might employ the forces of France while he executed his design against England. There wanted only a center to unite so many hatreds and jealousies ; he became that center, and he was fit for it.

This celebrated league was composed, of the Emperor Leopold, who had no passions, virtues, or talents, but those of his Council : he neither merited the glory of the happy events, nor the infamy of the crying injustice done in his reign ; of the Princes of Germany, who under the specious title of Sovereigns were only the first subjects of the Court of Vienna ; of Charles II. king of Spain, who was first to make a Will before he became famous ; Amadius Duke
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of Savoy, whose seasonable and wise changes supposed more policy than probity; and of the United Provinces; who could not be at rest while their Idol was in motion. Innocent XI. by entering indirectly into it, precipitated the Stuarts from the throne. As a Catholic, I spare the memory of a Pontiff, whom as a Frenchman and Historian I ought to paint in the most odious colours.

The Court of France trembled on this occasion; but it was only for the King of England. It sent a particular detail of the Prince of Orange's designs to London, and made an offer of sufficient succours to overturn them. James did not see far; and Sunderland saw with treacherous eyes. This artful Minister made him regard as chimerical the danger which others made him fear; the King was scarcely undeceived when his enemy appeared on the coast. William did not find in the people those dispositions with which he had been flattered, and which he desired. Few English joined him on his arrival, and he might have been easily overpowered. It was at least thought incontestable, that the King, who was at the head
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of a fine Army, might have made him share the danger.

James, who had wanted intelligence to discover the conspiracy, and activity to prevent it, wanted firmness to surmount it. He deliberated when he ought to have fought; he thought of regaining the hearts of his subjects, when he ought to have hindered them from revolting; and wanted to make sure of the fidelity of his troops, when he ought to have made use of their valour. A resolute air would have kept in their duty those who had the greatest propensity to rebellion, whereas an extraordinary dejection made the most faithful waver. William's haughtiness and intrepid appearance finished what James's weakness had far advanced. People loved a Prince who made himself feared, better than the Prince who feared him. They treated the army of the one with contempt, and flocked in crouds to the standard of the other. The King gave himself up to despair, not that which courage inspires, but that which is produced by cowardice, and which still increases it. He abandoned, without drawing a sword, an Empire which he ought to have continued to rule, or
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to have perished in it; he sought an asylum in that generous Nation, which is in possession of the glorious privilege of granting one to all unfortunate Sovereigns; but he found, that it would have been much more easy for him to preserve his dominions with the troops he had, than to recover them even with the forces of the greatest King.

Whilst James went to seek shelter in France against the storm, measures were taking in England to prevent his ever returning. The Peers of the Kingdom, who were at London, and the Magistrates of that capital, assembled, to provide for the government of the state. William was asked to assume it; and he did it accordingly, till an assembly which he appointed, composed of the two Houses, should have settled every thing. It was called a *Convention*, because the King alone can call a Parliament. No sooner were they met, than the odious and dangerous question was proposed, Whether there be an original compact between the king and his people; Whether James had broke it by his despotic administration; and Whether his subjects were not discharged from their oath of allegiance. The Commons, who they
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had taken care, should consist of the most republican spirits in the Nation, were unanimous for the affirmative on these three points; the Upper House hesitated long, but at last yielded, and the throne was declared vacant.

The more one thinks, the less wisdom and equity will he find in such a violent resolution. In fact, supposing Sovereigns to be made by the people, are they therefore to be their victims? The multitude having experienced the horrors of anarchy, sought an end of them by sacrificing their liberty; would it not be a manifest self-contradiction, should they imagine they had a right to recover it? From the time we suppose the supreme power yielded to the Monarch, it is evident that the Nation hath lost its rights. It is not to be denied, that a king may happen to make a bad use of his power against his subjects; but this evil is much less to be feared than the confusion which attends the contrary party. The remedy would be always infinitely more dangerous than the disease. Anarchy is a thousand times more dreadful than despotism.

What I have just mentioned, appears to

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me so evident, that I could never comprehend how men, who are not without understanding, and call themselves Philosophers, should not perceive the folly of submitting the conduct of Kings to the caprice of the multitude. Ministers bred up in the labyrinth of Politics find great difficulty in following the clew of publick affairs; and these men would have obscure Subjects, void of understanding and experience, made acquainted with the intrigues of the Cabinet, and with events on which depend the glory and safety of the State. The Sovereign, who, to succeed in his designs, hath been obliged to keep them secret, shall be condemned by restless subjects, to whom he cannot communicate the motives of his actions. Let a King miscarry in a wise, necessary, well-concerted and well-conducted enterprise, the People, who judge always by appearances and events, shall think him unworthy of the throne, and precipitate him from it.

It is an inconveniency, it is true, that the Laws should be violated with impunity by a Prince designed to protect them: But if every private person has a right to assume
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the defence of them against the sovereign authority, government will have no fixed point, nor politicks any principles; rebellions will be legal, and revolutions continual. As often as a part of the People shall take it into their heads, that the State is not conducted with all the wisdom and good success that it might be, they will think they have a right to take up arms to reform what shall appear amiss. Bold and factious men will find every day new pretexts to excite or foment troubles, which will give them credit, or at least celebrity. The whole world will be a horrible chaos impossible to be reduced into order. Societies will be without subordination, Empires without rule, and Kings without authority.

These reflexions are too natural and obvious, to have escaped all the members of the Convention. How happened it then, that no one had the courage to propose them, though there were many Royalists in the assembly? It is a riddle which the admirers of English liberty and generosity cannot easily explain. After all, the degradation of James II. gave rise to more difficulties than it put an end to. They found themselves engaged in a complicated and difficult labyrinth touch-

ing the establishment of a new form of government.

The rigid Church of England men pleaded with warmth for the recal of the fugitive Monarch. They consented however to a diminution of the royal authority: but the air of chagrin with which they did it, discovered that they would let it last as short time as possible. The defenders of this opinion, finding themselves too weak to prevail, joined with others who thought of placing the crown on the head of the Prince of Wales.

Of all the unjust parties which they could take, it was visibly the least bad. The young Prince had an evident right to the crown the moment it was supposed to be vacant. Hereditary right hath always passed for a fundamental law of the English Monarchy, and this custom hath been so much respected, that it was never opposed. It is true that the succession to the crown has occasioned the shedding torrents of blood: but these wars were not between the Kings and the People. Princes of the royal family seized the Sceptre, because each competitor pretended to be the lawful heir of the last king. The leaders of the faction who persecuted with fury the
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unfortunate James, had foreseen this obstacle, and had long before taken measures to remove it. They had spread a report that the birth of the Prince of Wales was supposititious; and however little ground there might be for the calumny, the ridiculous doubt which was affected on this head, served for a pretext to act in regard to the next heir of the throne as if he had not existed.

This resolution occasioned a commotion in the minds of the assembly, which was all at once quieted by a proposal, to establish a Regency. The overture was received with transports. Almost all the Peers and many of the Commons found that this arrangement would save the rights of the Crown and the honour of the Nation. It was only a personal injustice to the King, who were thereby declared incapable of governing. William perceiving this party on the point to prevail, took off the mask, by declaring, that if they did not give him proper marks of gratitude, he would cross the sea again, and leave them to the vengeance of the king whom they had dethroned.

This declaration gave boldness to the secret enemies of Monarchy. Heirs of the madness of Cromwel and Shaftsbury, they had

never lost sight of the plan of a republick. The time for laying the foundation of it seemed to be arrived. They proposed to make the Throne elective, that it might be more easy for them afterwards to overturn it. The Prince of Orange, who saw three heads on which the Crown ought to pass, before it came legally to adorn his brows, secretly supported this opinion with all his credit. However it had not many followers; and the publick indignation against it was so great, that it was necessary to have recourse to another expedient. They at length found one, that fixed the irresolution of which they almost despaired to see an end.

The Prince and Princess of Orange were conjointly placed on the throne, in quality of King and Queen; but it was left undetermined whether the Prince was called to it by election, or only in right of his wife. It was added, that if William survived Mary, he should continue to reign, to the prejudice of Anne second daughter of James; and that in case this Princess should die without children, the Crown should revert to those of the Prince, if he had any by a second marriage. After this the Convention was changed by the new king into a Parliament,
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in which all that had been done was solemnly confirmed. In the issue, the Parliament carried their power still farther. They involved in the misfortunes of the Steuarts all the Roman-Catholick Princes who might have a right to the crown. Religion made the House of Savoy be sacrificed to that of Hanover, which was farther from the Throne, and the Crown of Great Britain was irrevocably fixed on the head of the Protestants. William did not long survive this regulation. Death put an end to his days, when he was making preparations to deprive the House of Bourbon of the Succession to the Monarchy of Spain.

I am not afraid of advancing, that all the Portraits which have hitherto been given of this celebrated Prince, were drawn by Flattery rather than by Truth. Even his enemies have suffered themselves to be carried away by the torrent, and have copied, without discernment, what his pensioners had hazarded. He was a proof that good-luck influences characters as well as fortunes, and that a very mediocre King may possess a most brilliant reputation in History. Let us justify this kind of paradox by traits borrowed

from his Panegyrist. His looks prepossessioned one in his favour; but his behaviour betrayed him; it was proud, austere, and crabbed, yet mixed with an air of finesse always bad, though finesse itself be often useful. He spoke little, and very disagreeably; it was owing to his education, indolence, and pride. Diffimulation, to which he had been accustomed when young, was sometimes as fatal as advantageous to him: if the Dutch honoured it with the name of wisdom, the English detested it as distrust. He had more penetration to know men, than art to gain them; the inflexibility of his temper did not suffer him to bend to their tastes, their views, and their genius. No one can have less invention, nor more discernment; he projected badly, but judged well. His mind was not extensive enough to embrace many objects; and if he attained to the knowledge of the different Courts of Europe, it was by neglecting the domestic affairs of the States which he was appointed to conduct or govern. The great art of Sovereigns, the art of forming men, he was entirely ignorant of; talents under his reign gave no right to honours; they were dis-

dispensed by humour or caprice; this Prince fought less for able ministers, than for submissive courtiers. He carried both kinds of prejudice to the greatest height, and a first impression was never effaced; he loved or hated, he esteemed, or despised, without return. War was not his bright side. He never formed a siege which he did not raise, never fought a battle which he did not lose, and never entered into competition with any General, but he was beat: it is to complete his military eulogium, to say he was brave; and still it was less from Heroism than Religion; he was a Predestinarian. His successes prove not, so much as hath been pretended, the extent of his genius: chance made him Stadtholder, the irresolution of James II. placed him on a Throne, which he repented more than once, that he ever ascended. By the acknowledgment of all the English he discovered great inapplication, much humour, and very little capacity. His hatred against France was to him in place of every talent; it made him the head of a powerful League, attached to him all the Enemies of Lewis the Great, and gave him all the Refugees for Panegyrists,

NINTH EPOCH.

The Union of the Parliaments of England and Scotland, under the name of the Parliament of Great Britain, by the cares of Queen Anne, A. D. 1707.

WILLIAM carried to the grave with him the consolation of believing that he would reign after his death ; and that his designs, particularly the union of Scotland with England, would regulate the steps of the Court of London. These two kingdoms, known by the title of Great Britain since the crown had passed on the head of the Steuarts, were not however united but in name. One King, it is true, governed them, but they had their particular laws. Competition produced its usual effect. The more powerful People laboured to extend their rights, and the weaker to preserve theirs.

James I. had proposed to extinguish, by an union of the two nations, animosities, which,

which, though very old, were as keen as if they had but just sprung up. The two Parliaments entered at first with great eagerness into this plan. Some incidents, which they had not foreseen, cool'd them a little. The variable temper of the Prince became insensibly that of all whom he made choice of to conduct a negotiation attended with difficulties. This grand affair was forgot. It was agreed however, that acts of hostility should cease on the frontiers; that the Scots should have the right of naturalization in England, and the English in Scotland; and a free trade be opened between the two kingdoms. The last article displeased the English, and it was not observed.

Things remained in this state till Cromwel's usurpation. That Tyrant could think of no better way to strengthen his infant authority than a confederacy between England and Scotland, which was accepted. It lasted till the Scots, having by a return of virtue taken up arms in favour of the son whose father they had sold, were defeated at Worcester, and afterwards reduced to the obedience of the usurper. That great Politician profited himself of the right and pri-

privilege of Conquerors, to impose his yoke on the Vanquished. He incorporated Scotland, as well as Ireland, in the Republick which he had formed in England: the three kingdoms were governed by one Parliament.

The re-establishment of Monarchy restored to each Nation its ancient rights. The legal Authority thought it could not with decency attempt to maintain an union which had been the work of Usurpation. Charles II. endeavoured afterwards to renew this form of government, that he might more easily establish Arbitrary Power; but he found that what was easy to Cromwell was impossible for him. He was not artful enough to blind the Scots, nor powerful enough to intimidate them. They were just come out of civil wars, wherein their understandings had been informed, and their hearts strengthened. Every one, in that time of troubles, had studied the publick interest, and was accustomed to lavish his blood to support it. What happens in all States agitated by civil discords, had happened in Scotland, it was become a Nation of Patriots, Politicians, and Heroes.

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This love, this zeal for their Country was grown cold at the time of the Prince of Orange's invasion. The Scots did not only seem disposed to suffer an union; they condescended in some measure to ask it. Some cross accidents, ill-judged measures, and a certain coldness on the part of the English, made the project prove abortive. Some years after, King William wanted to renew this important affair, but circumstances were changed. The Scots, provoked by the ill treatment which they had received from the English on occasion of their settlement at Darien, haughtily rejected all the proposals made them. In vain did they labour to calm them. The King saw at length that he could do no more in that great work, than make the Princess Anne, who was to succeed him, sensible of its advantages.

The new Queen was afraid of hazarding too much should she engage, in the infancy of her power, in an affair wherein Kings established by a long reign had miscarried. She thought it necessary to wait till brilliant successes, and real services, had given her a claim to the obedience or love of her subjects, which the scepter does not always give. The

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unaccountable and almost incredible misfortunes of France prepared the way for this event.

This crown, which for more than half a century had decided the fate of nations, was so much humbled that it seemed to be on the brink of ruin. Its armies, always trained up in war, always triumphant, always invincible, were now only undisciplined, ignorant, overgrown bodies. Its Generals, whose bare name had inspired terror and admiration, were become the sport of their enemies and their soldiers. Its frontiers, which, if I may use the expression, had never seen an enemy, were trodden down, ravaged, conquered. Its ambassadors, used to talk like Sovereigns in most courts of Europe, stooped to the meanest supplications; and could not obtain to be seen nor heard. Its fleet, which had gained the empire of the sea from the industrious and superb kings of that element, was sunk as it were, and unable to protect its trade. Its resources, which had been thought inexhaustible, were dried up; its finances without order; its lands without labourers; its manufactories without workmen; the whole kingdom given up to the avidity of
a Partisan

a Partisan who completed its ruin. The Ministers, disconcerted by unexampled misfortunes, which they had neither had ability to foresee, nor the good fortune to prevent, did something more fatal than taking a bad party, they took none : unable to remedy all, they remedied nothing. The reign of Lewis XIV. which had begun with prodigies of greatness and glory, ended in prodigies of abjection and humiliation.

Though the losses which France sustained were the work of all the nations that had entered into the league to dethrone Philip V. Marlborough had the art to appropriate to himself all the glory.

That General, the most celebrated which his nation has had for many ages, had been at first introduced at Court by his sister, Miss Churchill, a mistress of the Duke of York. His agreeable person recommended him to the Dutchess of Cleveland, who reigned in the heart and in the councils of Charles II. He had afterwards the address to become the favourite of James II. He deserted that unhappy Prince, and obtained the same place about his successor. William, a witness of his behaviour during the war in Ireland, said
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publickly, that he had never seen any one with so little experience have so great talents for commanding an army. The Monarch from this time deprived him of his confidence, without discontinuing his esteem for him, and dying advised the Princess Anne, to make use of him as a man who had a cool head and a warm heart.

The English deceive themselves, or seek to deceive us, when they say Malborough united the valour of Condé, the skill of Turenne, and the good fortune of Luxembourg. Without proving that Cæsar might be equalled, as his Panygyrists are incessantly telling us, he was a great man. His valour was quite heroic, and distinguished itself in a nation which cannot be intimidated but by something more terrible than death. His soldiers never counted the numbers of the enemy : strong or weak, they fought only to fight : he had persuaded them that he could not be beat, and this persuasion made them invincible. Of the two ways of waging war, offensive and defensive, he knew only the first : wholly taken up with the care of attacking, he never studied to defend himself ; had he had a rival capable of diving
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into his character, he would have been often surpris'd and beaten. He hazarded steps which occasioned him to be suspected of rashness: his successes made his apology. Some Generals, even of his own time, had perhaps more extensive knowledge; no one's knowledge was more certain. He sought counsel among his subalterns, and if he rarely attributed to them the glory, he procured them at least the satisfaction of seeing their advice followed when it was good. His eye, which is the essential part of a General, was admirable: after viewing an army, retrenchments, a town, he knew with great certainty their good or bad disposition, their strength and weakness. Two considerable advantages prevented him from committing many faults: he was master of the operations, and perfectly acquainted with the theatre of the war. He was humane though a Conqueror, and discovered as great talents for gaining hearts as for taking towns. The eclat of his triumphs was less than their utility: many other Generals have known to conquer; no one knew better to make advantage of his victories. He equally served the Grand Alliance with his counsels and his sword, he may be said to have been the soul of it; and Prince Eugene, a greater man,

was obliged to be contented with an underpart. It seemed to be reserved to Marlborough alone to humble France; the misfortunes of that crown began when he appeared at the head of the armies, and ended when the command was taken from him. The praises which he forced his enemies to lavish on him, have completed his eulogium. One day some Gentlemen were talking of the Duke of Marlborough's avarice, and several instances of it mentioned, for the truth of which, Lord Bolingbroke, who was of the opposite Party to his Grace, was appealed to. "He was so great a man, replied this lord, that I have forgot his faults."

Marlborough's victories procured Queen Anne an authority which her Prodecessors never had. The three Nations that composed the English Monarchy, seemed determined to give without reserve into the views of a Princess who added such lustre to the Crown which she wore. These dispositions were eagerly seized to renew the union of Scotland with England. The proposal was made during the intoxication of the unexpected and incredible successes
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in 1706. The names of Barcelona, Turin, Ramillies, so dear to the English, abridged formalities. The choice of the Commissioners of the two Nations, entrusted with the management of this grand affair, was made by the Queen with great felicity and skill.

The English, who were thirty in number, all desired an union; some because they could not avoid supporting the views of a Court of which they were Pensioners; others, to extinguish insensibly the animosities which had so long deluged both kingdoms with blood; and a great number, in hopes of realizing the splendid chimera with which they pleased themselves, of establishing a Republick. These imagined that the Kings persecuted in England would no longer find an azylum among the Scots, united to the English by the bonds of a common interest. The earl of Godolphin, a man of sound sense, and great command of temper, stood not in need of much address to manage this party.

The Earl of Stairs, who was at the head of the Scots commissioners, had a much more difficult part to act. That false Patriot, whose policy was sure and profound,

determined the Queen to chuse for Commissioners from Scotland such Noblemen of that kingdom as were most distinguished by their opposition to the Union and the Court. His motive was sublime and singular. Commissioners agreeable to the Ministry, said he, are odious to the Nation, and will never bring over the multitude; whereas those who are known to be against the Court, and whom the People regard as their Protectors, may be gained, will be gained infallibly, and will bring the Parliament of Scotland into their sentiments.

What Lord Stairs had foreseen, actually happened. The Commissioners were seduced by methods which all the world knows, or may easily guess. This first success gave hopes, but at bottom it decided nothing. What had been done in the Committee behoved to be approved by the two Parliaments, and it was no easy task to bring that of Scotland to consent. The Commissioners, become pensioners of the Court, at which they continued to rave that they might serve it the better, laboured with success to obtain this point. The reasons which they laid before the Parliament, to make it approve of the union, were specious enough.

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They strongly represented, that the discussions which had more than once overturned the two kingdoms, were too recent, to delay agreeing to arrangements which would insure peace between them ; that this union would give Great Britain an ascendant which it never yet had had, and would make it in some sort the arbiter of Europe ; that Scotland, confined to a mean and unprofitable trade, would share with England that of the Colonies, and the rest of the world ; that under the new Government, the Scots would be so much favoured, they would only contribute a fortieth to the charge of government, and have the eleventh part of the legislative power ; and that Scotland would be paid sufficient sums to discharge her debts and encourage her manufactures. These offers, supported by all that can give them weight, brought many to approve the Union ; but as the Court had not money enough to buy all who were willing to sell themselves, a considerable number still opposed it.

These expressed their indignation against a project which was to deprive them of their sovereignty, their laws, their honour, their rights, and their independency. Every thing

predicted their Country's becoming a Province to a State of which it had always been the Rival. They traversed the Union from different motives: the Jacobites, because it obliged them to acknowledge the succession to the Crown hereditary in the House of Hanover; the Presbyterians, because they were afraid of their religion, the Duke of Hamilton, because he did not despair of one day ascending the throne of Scotland; the Earl of Hume and his friends, because they were true Patriots; many, because they wanted to revenge themselves on the Queen, who had offended them by neglecting them, or by courting them with less eagerness than some others.

To render these passions of service, they ought to have been united; and unhappily there was not one found capable of it. Every branch of this Party acted separately, and followed its particular views. Some would willingly have consented to a Confederacy like that of the United Provinces and the Swiss Cantons, where the union consists only in a dependance on the same sovereignty, and a mutual concurrence for its defence; but incorporation seemed to them dishonorable

norable. Others detested all union with England, however advantageous, but they wanted resolution, and were more afraid of War than of Slavery. These spoke only of extirpating the Tyrants and the Traitors, the Commissioners who had sold Scotland, and the English who had bought it: the People were all of this sentiment. The others mixed more moderation in their vengeance; they were not averse to coming to extremities, but were unwilling to break out ineffectually; and the impossibility France found herself in to support them, determin'd them to submit to the yoke. In general, those who opposed the Union, had no fixed point; whence it happened, that they got from them by piece-meal what they would never have granted any other way; they were brought by degrees to adopt the plan of it as first laid down.

The principal articles of this Act, so dear to the English, so odious to the Scots, were: That the two Kingdoms should for the future be but one, under the name of Great Britain, to commence from the month of May 1707: That one King, of the House of Hanover, should reign equally over all

the parts of the new Empire: That there should be but one Parliament, which was to sit in England, to which Scotland should send Deputies, who were to yield the precedence to the English, and where every thing should be decided by a majority of voices, though Scotland was reduced to sixteen Peers and forty-five Commons; whereas the number of the others was not limited.

No sooner was the ratification of this famous treaty made publick, than the general indignation gave room to fear that they had been labouring to no purpose. The minds of men seemed as averse to the union, as if infinite precautions had not been taken to prepare them for it. All ran to their arms. Had the Nobility regulated the motions of the People, and supported their discontents, Scotland probably would have avoided the yoke, and still possessed the credit which it had formerly in the island, and the consideration in which it was held abroad. Unhappily, it experienced what accelerates all revolutions, that men are less Patriots the more they are obliged to be such, and that those whom the Country recompenses most, serve it least. It is true, that the Nobility, disgusted by
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the neglect with which they were treated, joined afterwards their resentment to the zeal of the multitude ; but treachery had discovered their intrigues, and authority had dissipated their plots, when the succours brought from France by the Pretender appeared to no purpose on the coasts of Scotland. This enterprize, which might have ruined the Union, strengthened it. It made known its enemies, and furnished pretexts for depressing them. This great work met with little opposition afterwards; and the estate of annihilation into which it every day reduces Scotland, will occasion it still less for the future. England profited herself of these losses, and it may be affirmed, that she has gained more by the Union than by all the prodigies of Queen Anne's reign.

This Princess presented to the English a spectacle which they were not used to : A Queen the head of a powerful League, and the arbiter of the fate of Europe : An uninterrupted series of Victories for nine years : The terror and glory of the British arms carried to the banks of the Danube : The Emperor established on a Throne shaken
by

by his blunders and misfortunes : All the crowns of Charles V. twice tottering on the head of the lawful heir : The Empire of the Sea and superiority in Trade insured to Great Britain by Conquests or by Treaties : France reduced to purchase with considerable cessions, a Peace, of which she used to prescribe the conditions : The Spanish Monarchy forced to share its Provinces with one Power, and its treasures with another : England augmenting her wealth amidst the troubles and expences of war : And the most violent and artful factions stifled or suppressed without costing the Nation a drop of blood, or interrupting its tranquillity.

When we enquire a little into the character of Queen Anne, we cannot help giving the honour of a part of these events to her Ministers. This Princess seemed equally removed from desiring them, from paving the way to them, and from profiting herself of them. She carried her moderation so far, that not all the flatteries of her Courtiers, nor the successes of her Generals, could ever inspire her with ambition. Her goodness was uncommon ; She was never fatigued

tigued with requests, nor exhausted by conferring favours. A certain timidity made her afraid of brilliant actions, and she always acted with reluctance the part of Sovereign. Her mildness procured her Censurers and Friends; she bore the outrage of several of her Subjects with an insensibility, which, according to some, did honour to the Throne, and according to others, debased it. She has been reproached of blindly following the views of her Council, and of often yielding too much to the will of her Ministers: it will be difficult to answer this accusation. She carried her love and complaisance to her husband the Prince of Denmark so far, as to make too frequent use with him of certain liquors: this taste, unsuited to her sex and dignity, shortened her days, and sullied her glory. It may be questioned, whether Anne was a great Queen; but it is certain that her Reign was most glorious.

T E N T H and Last E P O C H.

The present State of the Parliament.

TO be properly acquainted with the Parliament of England, it is not sufficient to know in what circumstances it was established, and by what happy revolutions it attained to the degree of authority it at present possesses; one must farther be informed of a certain detail, which may be called the mechanism of this assembly. It is indeed the least agreeable part of my work, but it is an essential one. It would be always tiresome; and often impossible, to trace to their origin, and mark the variations of the different usages which have prevailed in Parliament: we shall only take notice of those that prevail at present.

The Parliament of England is an Assembly of the Nobility, of the People, and of the King himself, who presides in it so essentially, that without him it is no Parliament, cannot assume the name, and has not the authority of one. We easily perceive that such a government is necessarily
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an inconstant theatre, where the decorations must change more frequently than elsewhere. Sometimes three different interests have reigned in it, supported by three different powers, with all the asperity, noise, and obstinacy of the most violent passions. It is natural to think that this multitude of Legislators at least preserve a dignity in their assemblies: Yet their sittings have been not unfrequently spent in unbecoming jests on affairs of importance, in grave harangues on trifles, in encomiums on one's own party, and invectives on the opposite faction; in calumnies, and defences. For one important event transacted, many odd scenes are given. One of the English oracles concluded his speech in 1693. by saying, that he hoped to see, before the end of the year, the French king appear at their bar, and ask peace of the Parliament on his knees.

We have just seen what the Parliament is, let us now see what are its privileges. The King, without this great Body, cannot repeal the old laws, nor enact new ones, nor explain obscure ones, nor impose taxes, or determine the manner of raising them,
nor

nor legitimate Bastards, or naturalize Foreigners, nor regulate weights and measures. In all other things the authority of a King of England is as extensive as that of any Sovereign. And still, if he be born to reign, his place or his genius will supply means almost infallible, to obtain what the laws refuse him. "All the voices of the Parliament are to be sold," said a plain Man to Walpole: "And I know their Price," replied that celebrated Minister. The King, said Lord Haversham, has a still more easy way to make himself absolute: it is only pronouncing these three words, *Popery, France, Pretender*, to make us forget our most essential interests.

Their passions must be very strong, to blind such a numerous body. The Parliament is divided into two Houses, the Upper, and the Lower. The first consists of the King who presides in it, or the Chancellor in his absence; of the Princes of the Blood, the Officers of State, who are the Chancellor, High Treasurer, and Keeper of the Privy Seal; the three Officers of the Crown, the Chamberlain of England, the Steward of the Household, and the Chamber-

berlain of the Household ; of the Peers of the Kingdom, who are the Dukes, Marquises, Earls, Viscounts, and Barons ; two Archbishops, and twenty four Bishops. All these Lords sit in the Upper House by a Privilege attached to their quality. Some Judges, without having a deliberative voice, are also received there, solely to give their opinion, and resolve the difficulties which may arise touching the explanation of the Laws, and the Judgments appealed from to the House of Peers. The House of Commons consists of a Speaker, who is the President of the House, of one hundred and four Knights deputed from the fifty-two counties into which England is divided ; of two citizens for each city, and two burgessees for each borough that has a right to send deputies to Parliament. There are no judges in this House, because it has no judicial power. The authority of the two houses hath been often shaken. Cromwel suppressed the house of Peers, and ignominiously drove away from the place of their meeting the members of the other : he caused put up over the door of Westminster Hall : *A Hall to be lett.*

One advantage, which an English Monarch cannot prize too much, because it depends not on the caprice of the multitude, is, that he has the sole power of calling, proroguing, and dissolving the Parliament. Hence a King can keep a Parliament as long as it favours his views, and dismiss them, when he meets with any opposition. This brilliant prerogative is one of those which the English most envy their Sovereigns. They succeeded in spoiling William III. of a part of it. That Prince consented to the fixing the duration of the Parliament to three Years : his policy served him ill on this occasion ; and the zeal of Queen Mary, who seconded him so well, only made one of those extraordinary virtues shine out, of which the English History furnishes more examples, than that of any other nation. The Queen was desirous that Lord Bellemont her Treasurer should oppose the project of a triennial Parliament. But, as that Lord thought it for the good of the Nation, he refused to enter into the views of the Court. They then desired that he would only not go to the House, and remain neuter. But even this temperament he disliked, and was one of those who contributed

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buted most to make the bill pass. The Queen immediately dismissed him from his employments, and Bellemont took the party that became a man of wisdom and steadiness. Without debasing himself by a defence or complaint, he retrenched his expences, and confined himself to a private life. The English were struck with such generosity. Both the Court and Country Party flocked in crowds to the disgraced Courtier, to express their admiration of his Virtue, and intreat him to share their fortunes. The Queen, recovered, by the example of her subjects, to true greatness, offered him a pension, to enable him to live suitable to his birth : but My Lord, carrying Heroism to its utmost limits, made answer, that no longer doing any service, he thought it his duty to refuse any recompence. Can it be believed after this, how easily George I. obtained the repeal of this favourite act which established triennial Parliaments? It is only in England that the Government is in such manifest contradiction with itself.

There is perhaps a still more apparent contradiction between the terms used in calling the Parliament, and the authority it possesses. The King writes himself to each spiritual and temporal Lord, to repair to Parliament, to give
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him *advice*; and he makes the Chancellor write to the Sheriff of each county, and to the Mayor of each city and borough, to send to Parliament the Deputies of the People, to *consent* to what shall be resolved on. As soon as these letters are received, they proceed to the elections. Animosities, canvassing, and divisions, now reign throughout the kingdom: the Whigs and Tories, Republicans and Royalists, the lovers of independency and those of despotism, the Court and the Country party; all these different factions occasion such a ferment, that Great Britain, at each new Parliament, may be said to be in the delirium of a high fever. Each party would have Members to its liking, and the parties change their views, their interests, and their maxims daily: It is impossible to reduce them into regular classes, or to fixed principles. They divide into as many branches, as there are resolute minds among them to head the different factions. The divisions among the Whigs and Tories, or, as they are now called, the Court and the Opposition, are daily multiplied, and often form fifteen or twenty different classes. The judicious, wise, and virtuous subjects, witnesses of these political convulsions, meddle not in publick business;
and

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and rich, fiery, ambitious men become the arbiters of the national interest. The People, who formerly paid those who undertook to support their rights, now sell them their votes. The most opulent, or the most lavish, is sure to be chosen. It is true that after having ruined themselves to get into Parliament, they endeavour to make the Court buy them dear. The Members set their complaisance at such a high price in the reign of William III. that he told them one day, "Gentlemen, I should be
" obliged to you if you would reduce your
" several demands to one, that I might know
" if the whole kingdom can satisfy you."

As soon as the Parliament is met at Westminster, the King goes thither in his Royal Robes, attended by the Princes of his blood, the Great Officers of State, and of the Crown; and being seated on the throne, opens the Parliament by a speech which he deliver himself, or by the Chancellor, relating to the business on which it hath been summoned. He then goes out; and is not obliged to return till the end of the Sessions, to confirm what shall have been agreed on. Before entering on any business, the Members must take three oaths; that of Allegiance, by which they condemn the

opinion of those who admit any power superior to the royal; that of Supremacy, by which the King is acknowledged Head of the Church of England; and the Test, by which they abjure the doctrine of transubstantiation, the invocation of saints, and the Mass. Afterwards the two Houses deliberate separately. What has been concluded upon in one, is communicated to the other. If it is approved by both, they express their approbation in these terms, *the Lords, the Commons, have agreed*. If the two Houses happen to be of different sentiments, the Commons go to the Upper House to confer with the Lords; or both Houses appoint a Committee, who meet in the *Painted Chamber*. When the Commons treat with the Lords, either as a House or by a Committee, it is always with great marks of respect on the part of the Commons. They stand, uncovered, all the time the conferences last, and the Lords sit covered. If the two Houses cannot agree, the affair is dropt. Their consent, even if unanimous, is not sufficient without the King's. Whilst the two Houses are treating of temporal matters, the Clergy assemble in the place appointed by the King, to deliberate on those of the Church; but however wise or expedient

expedient their regulations may be, they receive all their force from the approbation or authority of Parliament.

Such are the men who rule the fate of England. It must not be imagined however, that the Parliament can decide in all kind of business; the Houses are only to employ themselves in those affairs for which the King acquaints them they have been convoked. It nevertheless happens very frequently, that others matters are discussed in it than those which have been proposed to them; but it would seem that this is not or ought not to be done without the consent of the King; for Queen Elizabeth sent one of the Members to the Tower for barely proposing to advise her in an affair that did not properly fall under the cognizance of Parliament.

It was the custom in former times to signify to the counties before-hand the causes of assembling the Parliament. While this wise usage was observed, the Court could not make itself master of the Parliament, because the Members were forced to vote according to the views and orders of their constituents. Since the Kings have insensibly shaken off this disagreeable obligation, the People, who are ignorant of what is transacted in Parliament, are obliged to give

their representatives an unlimited power, which they use as they think proper. No sooner are they met, than the parties are formed, the canvassing begins, and the cabals clash against each other; those who hold the first places in the Government, endeavour to gain by the pensions, places, and favours that are in their disposal, such members as they stand in need of; for, as William III. said, "If a King of England had places enough to give to all that seek them, the names of Whig and Tory would soon be lost."

Those who are neglected, or who are in the opposition, unite in violently declaiming against such as have suffered themselves to be gained. They know very well, that their invectives will bring back no one to his duty; but they gratify their resentment, or acquire the flattering title of Defenders of Liberty. They direct their utmost efforts against the most powerful Minister, whose conduct they attack with great violence. The celebrated Walpole was the person they have least spared of late. He had so much philosophy or ambition, still to pursue his views: accordingly it was said, that he resembled Gideon's fleece, which received and sucked in the dew, while all round it was dry.

To inspire zeal or add dignity to the Members of the two Houses, they enjoy a privilege that is both useful and honorable. They or their domestics cannot be imprisoned on any account but for murder, treason, or felony. This immunity is common to all that have a seat in Parliament, but the two Houses have each their particular advantages. The Peers, especially the Bishops, have not that credit in the Nation which they ought naturally to possess, because it is imagined they are almost all dependent on the Court either by favours received or hoped for. The Commons are regarded as the defenders of the Nation's Rights, and are held in that consideration in which the Lords were formerly.

The Upper House has the power of judging without appeal, and of reversing all wrong judgments given in inferior courts. The jurisdiction of the Lower House extends but to its own members, and these it can only imprison. The first can only approve or reject the Bills sent up to them relating to taxes, without making, or even proposing any Amendment. The latter, as representing the People, have assumed the right of proposing, and granting subsidies to the King, or of refusing them.

The King can augment the number of Peers in Parliament ; accordingly Queen Anne created twelve at a time ; but when the Peerage is once conferred on a Family, it cannot be stript of it but for a crime which renders it unworthy of that honour, and by a legal condemnation. The number of the Commons is fixed, and neither the King nor the People can augment or diminish it.

In fine, the Lords have a power of voting in Parliament by Proxy, provided they obtain leave of the King to be absent, which is never denied. The Members of the Lower House, without possessing the right of voting by proxy, frequently absent themselves. Of 558 Members who ought to be in the House, oftentimes not above two hundred attend ; which makes cabals more easy. A Whig said one day to another Whig, that had he been in the house that morning, their party would have gained an important point. By how many did you lose it, asked the Absentee coldly ? Only by one, answered the complainant. Had I been in the House, replied the former, we should have lost it by four, for there would have been four more Tory Members, whom I purposely kept all morning at the Tavern.



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